



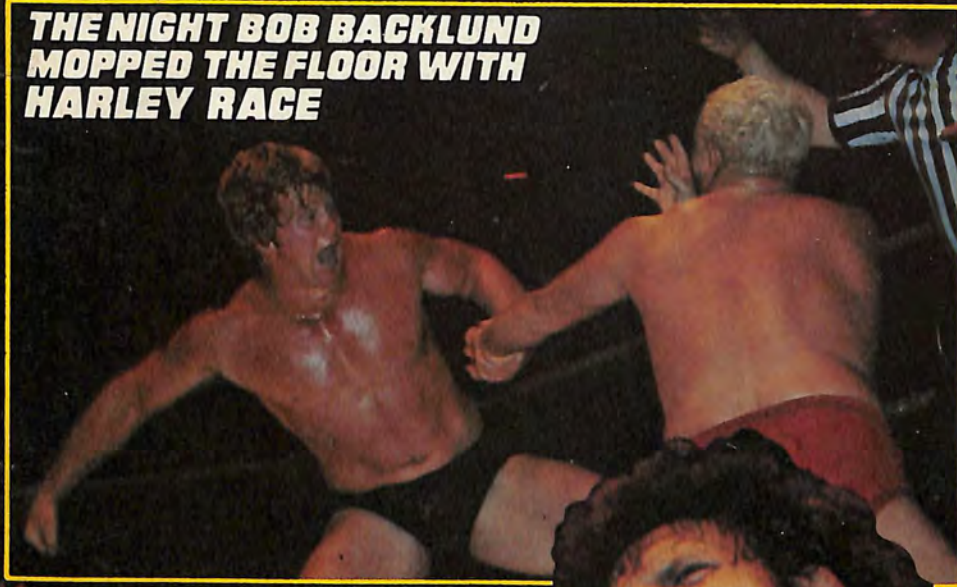
**Inside**

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH  
IVAN PUTSKI?**

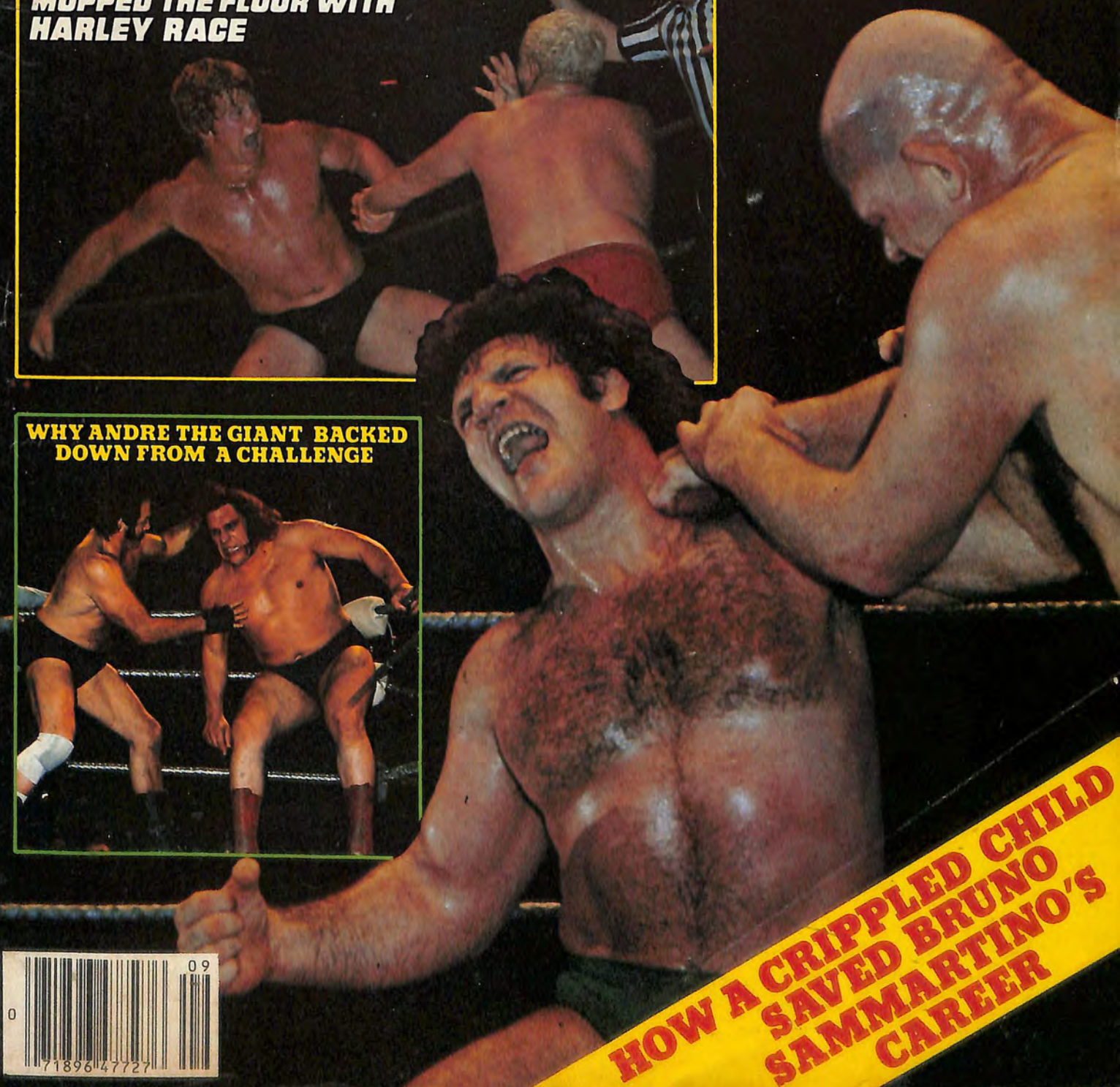
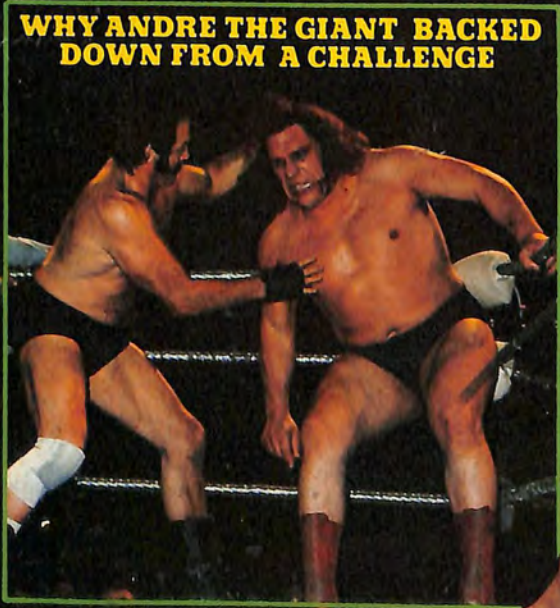
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# **Wrestling**

**THE NIGHT BOB BACKLUND  
MOPPED THE FLOOR WITH  
HARLEY RACE**



**WHY ANDRE THE GIANT BACKED  
DOWN FROM A CHALLENGE**



**HOW A CRIPPLED CHILD  
SAVED BRUNO  
SAMMARTINO'S  
CAREER**





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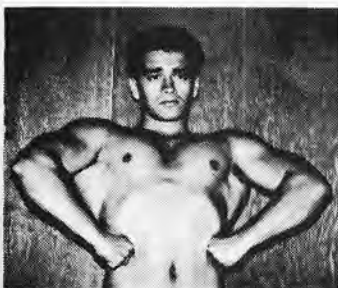
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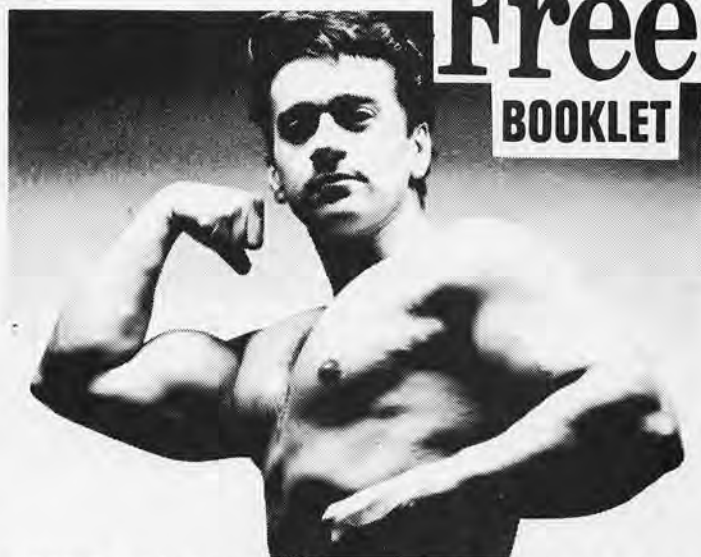
"I'm transforming all the fat off my body and changing it into rock-hard muscle. It's amazing. I have lost 8" off my waist. I can actually see my muscles growing from day to day." P. Williams

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# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Peter  
King

Editor-in-Chief

The time for soft words and diplomatic columns is over. The time for action has arrived. Superstar Billy Graham's ugly championship reign must be stopped---NOW!

I have watched this "champion" wrestle in every one of his title matches. He is a disgrace. Yes, a disgrace. I have never seen any wrestler use so many cruel tactics so ruthlessly. No true wrestling fan should have to watch a champion who behaves like this.

Worse still, Graham is smart. Very, very smart. He knows well how to use all the rulebook technicalities to which a champion is allowed. On at least 10 occasions I have seen Graham get himself disqualified when he was only seconds away from losing fairly. Something must be done to tighten the rules--or Graham may be champion forever.

Probably the most disgusting exhibition this "champion" ever put on came against Chief Jay Strongbow. Obviously, Graham was afraid he would not be able to defeat the Chief. So he attacked Jay before the bell--getting himself disqualified even before the match could begin! Sure Graham knew he would lose the match. But he didn't care. All this bum wanted to do was to retain his title. Worse still, he knew Jay wouldn't be eligible for another title match for 30 days. This is how Billy Graham, "Superstar," defends his title. If you ask me, it stinks!

Something must be done, and here is my modest proposal: The WWWF should strike the clause allowing a champion to retain his belt even after being disqualified. If a champion loses--in any manner--let him also forfeit his belt. Then we will see whether Mr. Billy Graham is a true champion--or a complete chump!



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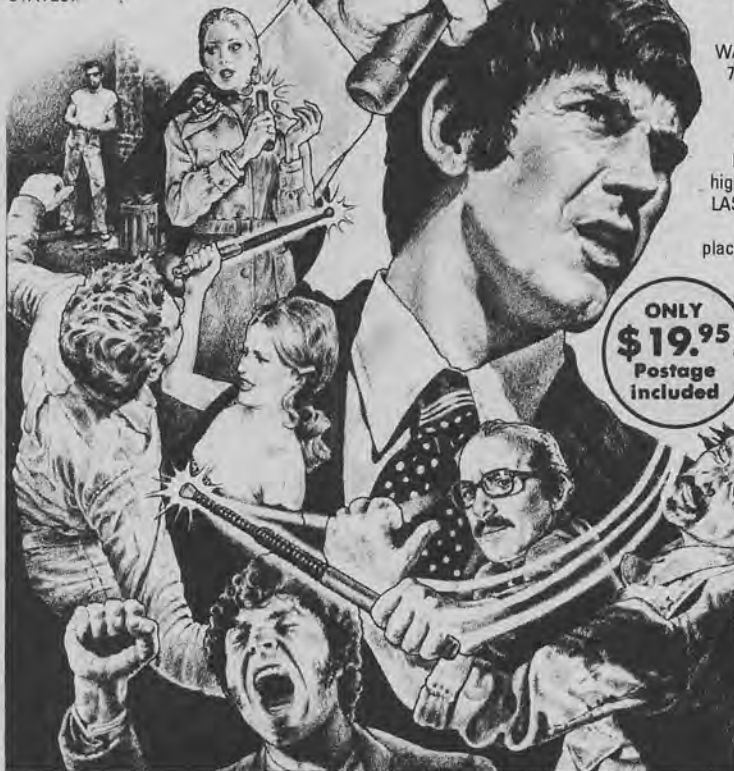
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# Body Slams & Pinfalls

By Dan Shocket

**I**F THE Smithsonian Institute ever wants a collection of mindless drivel, the letters being sent to me by angry fans are available. The idiotic letters won't be available for long, however; the garbage truck comes in the morning.

At first, I thought this would be a good time to quote some of the more moronic statements I've received. Then I realized there's no reason for any of this cretinous drooling to see print. The letters do have a function, though. I own a parakeet. They paper his cage.

So, if you idiots insist on writing me nasty letters, rest assured they won't do you any good. This column remains dedicated to the men who wrestle any way they see fit. They laugh at the fans, aren't afraid of their opponents, and wouldn't stoop to bribing referees. Call them rule-breakers, revile their names, but expect to read their praises in this column!

All the insults in the world aren't worth the one decent letter I received from Bobby Heenan, manager extraordinaire. This remarkable man wrote to thank me for the work I've been doing on behalf of the men he manages. Here are a few lines from his brilliant letter:

"We are the vanguard. Like all revolutionaries, we must expect insults from and opposition of those we try to aid. Against all odds, we must remain strong in our convictions, resolute on our purpose. The fate of wrestling is in our hands. We have already won the major titles. Now we must



Captain Lou Albano (left) and the equally brilliant George Cannon (right) will run the wrestling commissions soon. I cannot wait. When they take over you can kiss your scientific wrestlers goodbye!



wage the greater battle for the people's hearts. Together, we will succeed."

I have that letter framed in my office. Next to it is an autographed photo of the manager, inscribed: "To Dan, Great men oft pass on before their cause is proven just."

So I'll keep on talking to the people who don't want to listen to the things I am saying, hoping someone just might hear. And if I die explaining the things people complain about are things they could be changing, I know someone will care. There are many lone reporters fighting worlds turned deaf and blind, could be crucified for what they try to show. Though their copy may be scattered by the swirling winds of time, the truth remains though no one wants to know.

And the truth is this: the so-called scientific wrestlers are cowards afraid to wrestle fairly.

They hide behind bribed referees and fans who worship toadies instead of men. They are peasants, ready to do anybody's bidding for a favor later. So when they can't win a title, they start collecting favors from corrupt commissioners. The real champion is stripped of his title and it is awarded to a popular mat lackey. We've seen it happen before. It will happen again. And all with the fans' approval.

When I write about these crimes, I expect the fans to write angry letters. Stupid people can't be blamed when they react stupidly. But a man has to write the truth no matter how blind and corrupt the world might be. And to that end, I dedicate "Bodyslams and Pinfalls."

Fortunately, when I feel overwhelmed by yahoo fans and glory hungry colleagues (not mentioning any names, Randy Gordon), I take refuge in knowing I have the respect

*(Continued on page 52)*





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# **'TOP SECRET**

## **Behind the Dressing Room Door**

**by Randy  
Gordon**

**A**FTER A WEEK'S stay in Florida, I returned to our New York office to find a flood of mail on my desk. Out of 487 pieces of mail, 307 were addressed to "Ban Dan." Only 27 were against me and the attitude I take in favor of wrestlings' scientific grapplers.

One writer called me a "... pompus, egotistical moron," and told me "... it's Dan Shocket's right as an American to be able to state his feelings honestly and openly." Sure it is. But Dan doesn't know where to draw the line. When he goes sticking up for and even assisting men who blind, maim and cripple people, I say that's going too far. And if there are some fans who cannot understand my point of view, well, they belong with the likes of Shocket, Albano, Blassie, etc.

I just don't consider throwing fire in a man's face and gouging his eyes with a foreign object to be within the realm of sport. Those kind of actions go further than rulebreaking. I consider them to be criminal actions, and the men who perform them should be banned from wrestling for life. Judging from the heavy volumn of your letters, most of you fans are behind me. That in itself tells me everything.

Now that he is WWWF champion, Billy Graham's ego has really run away from the rest of the world. Because he holds the belt, Graham deservedly gets the first-class treatment that all champions are entitled to. But Billy overdoes it like no champion I've ever seen. At Madison

*(Continued on page 50)*



# MONEY...

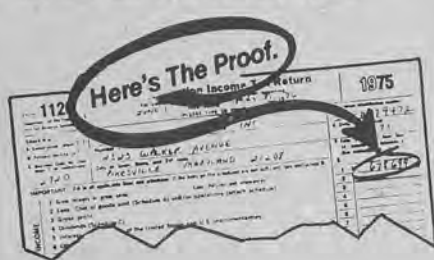
## First Come, First Served.

"This is the system, the *whole* system and the *only* system I used to walk home with 500,000 clams. I GUARANTEE it will make you a winner in 30 days." **MIKE WARREN**

From now on, if you lose your shirt on the ponies, you have no one but yourself to blame.

Because I—Mike Warren—am going to show you how to win back your shirt, your bank balance and your zest for life. I'm going to lead you back to GREEN PASTURES and the GOOD LIFE you've always hankered for—the big house, the summer home, the swimming pool, the three cars, the six week vacations—the whole bit.

I'm going to teach you seven little secrets. Seven little secrets that earned me well over \$500,000 last year, \$300,000 the year before. \$150,000 the year before that. And \$75,000 the very first year I perfected my system.



Here's the proof: a photostat of Mike Warren's IRS return for Calendar 1975.

Nobody—but I mean NOBODY—can duplicate my record for picking winners over the past four years.

Which may sound like bragging. But the day you walk away from a parimutuel window with winnings of \$10, \$20 and even \$50 on a modest \$2 wager—as a result of using my system—you'll think I'm the best friend you ever had. And as your winnings pile up—and you really start to turn your life around... and as you realize you have now become a consistent winner at the track—you're going to start blowing me long distance kisses or sending me love notes like the ones I get every day:

Dear Mr. Warren:  
You DID IT! You solved the problem I've been working on for years! I have never run across so accurate or refined a system of playing the horses in all my life. I have thrown away all the charts, plastic slides, and "professional systems" in my library. I just can't get over how your simple system put me onto winner after winner! TEN BUCKS!!!! Hell, you should charge three hundred times that for what you're disclosing!  
Sincerely,  
D.R.S., San Diego, CA 92117

Dear Mike,  
What a payoff. \$15.20 for ELSIE to win and \$246.80 for the exacta—\$2,620 for a \$20 bet. Mike, thank you. You are free to use this letter and I will have it notarized.  
Sincerely,  
BOB COOKE, 3 West 51 St.  
New York, N.Y. 10019

Sworn to me this  
4th day of February 1976  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
Dear Mike,  
Your method is fool proof. I have won 70% of the races I have received from you since Saturday.  
Again, thank you.  
Randall W., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Convinced? Okay, but already I can hear you asking: "WHY IS THIS GUY GIVING IT AWAY?"

The answer is twofold and very simple. One, I'll make a bundle on the book I'm selling you.

Two, very few bettors have the character to stick to any system, let alone my "SYSTEM OF THE CENTURY".

So in a way, I'm challenging you as a bettor and as a man. Because if you think of it, there isn't a reason in the world why a serious bettor shouldn't be a consistent winner—maybe not to the tune of 500,000 a year—but still, he ought to be in the black. Even the occasional horseplayer shouldn't have to take a drubbing every time he visits the track.

Yet most bettors are consistent losers. Why? You'd better ask the shrinks. They claim the habitual loser secretly wants to lose. You figure it out.

All I know is, they lose and lose and lose and they never learn. It's a pity, but it has a paradoxical effect.

BECAUSE OF THE HABITUAL LOSERS, THE ODDS FAVOR THE MAN WITH A GOOD SYSTEM WHO STICKS TO IT.

In other words, it's the losers who feed the winners.

Tomorrow morning, when I get up, my biggest problem will be to figure out whether I should play golf, putter around with my Mercedes, take the wife to Acapulco, fly to Florida with my kids to see Disney World or even visit my in-laws.

I'm 33 years old. I can live this life style the rest of my days.

So when people tell me you can't beat the ponies, what can I say?

I beat them all the time. I NEVER lose. I've proved it.

### WHAT IS "THE SYSTEM OF THE CENTURY"?

I could almost squeeze it in on the rest of this page. It's so simple, if you've never placed a bet before or even been to a race track, you'll consistently find yourself on the boards, walking away from the parimutuel window with \$10's, 20's and, yes, even \$50's for your \$2 wager.

The System consists of seven rules—seven rules you can read and memorize in just one hour at home. One of these rules—Rule 4—is so elementary that you can go to any race track with an infield turf (grass) course and start writing your own checks tomorrow as if you'd been a track pro for 20 years.

If you're a regular horseplayer, "The System of the Century" could put you on Easy Street as a permanent resident. Let me give you a clue: how many times have you spent hours poring over a single race, doping out every detail, figuring every angle... only to find that the horse you picked to begin with... and decided against for some reason even you can't remember—romped home an easy winner? YOU ALMOST HAD IT, BUT YOU LOST IT. YOU SCRAPPED ONE RULE IN FAVOR OF ANOTHER. YOU HAD NO SYSTEM. YOU HAD NO PRIORITIES.

A lifetime at the track—under the wing of my father, who was a handicapper before me—listening

### Who is Mike Warren?

The man RACING FORUM calls "The Jack Anderson of American handicapping," and the son of a handicapper, Mike Warren gained early exposure to the world of horses and tracks, jockeys and trainers, losers and winners.

Today, as America's premier handicapper, Mike is well on his way to becoming a self made millionaire at 33—because he picks 'em with uncanny accuracy. And he does it with more than talent.

In an atmosphere crackling with excitement, Mike leads a highly specialized network of professionals, fine-tuned and coordinated to produce one single product: winners.



Mike and his team dispense this precious product to subscribers as conscientiously as a first-rate investigative reporter reveals and interprets news as quickly as it happens.

to trainers, owners, jockeys, high rollers and handicappers—asking questions, taking notes, keeping records of wins and losses—and then putting it all together—this was how I learned what those priorities are.

And they're incorporated into "The System of the Century".

And now it's all yours. \$10 MAY BE ALL YOU NEED TO GET STARTED.

Here's how failsafe my system is... provided you follow my seven little rules strictly and without exception. Then you'll start cashing in on those big parimutuel tickets most people just dream about.

Now, I recognize that the world is full of skeptics—even the wise get fooled once in a while. So I make this proposition to you:

SEND ME \$10.00. I WON'T CASH YOUR CHECK FOR 30 DAYS.

That \$10.00 is payment in full for "The System of the Century".

Use the System at your local race track for 30 days, making sure to follow my rules as outlined therein. Bet as much as you want—and keep what you take in with my blessings! If my method fails to work in exactly the manner I've described, you have risked nothing—because I'll send your original check back to you uncashed. In fact, date your check one month ahead—that way nobody can touch your ten bucks while you prove for yourself whether my System is everything I say it is.

Could anything be fairer? I've proved my System works—it's making millions for a handful of smart bettors.

And here I am offering it to you with a 30 day free trial money-back guarantee.

You're a smart bettor. How can you walk away from odds like that?

### Sworn Statement...

This is to certify that all statements made in this ad are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. MIKE WARREN is a professional handicapper of Thoroughbred horses, and his gross income for the last twelve months was in excess of \$500,000.00.

*A. Belous*

### CLIP AND MAIL TODAY

VSG-897

Mike Warren  
The Baltimore Bulletin, Inc.  
Professional Building  
Baltimore, MD 21208

Dear Mike,  
I can't afford to pass up your offer. Please send me "The System of the Century" by return mail. I understand that if your method doesn't make big money for me as you have outlined, all I have to do is return it within 30 days and my uncashed check will be returned to me.  
On that basis, here is my check for \$10.00 dated one month from now. (If you're enclosing a money order that can't be dated ahead, you have the same money back guarantee.)  
☐ For immediate shipment, first class, add 50c (in coin or stamps please.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to "The Baltimore Bulletin".

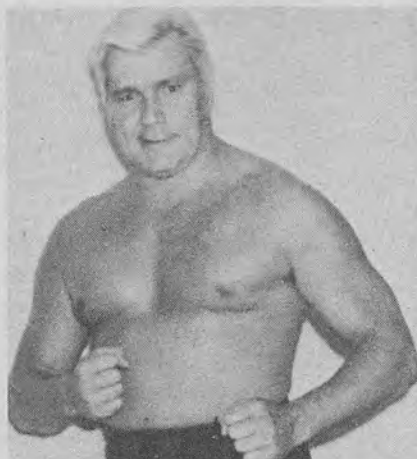
# TOP WRESTLE

## YOUR QUESTION

The "Question of the Month" is:

**"Do you think there should be two referees in tag team matches?"**

**Submitted by:  
Willie  
Montgomery;  
Denmark, S.C.**



**PAT PATTERSON**

"I really don't think the presence of a second referee in a tag team match would make much of a difference. In fact, I think having a second referee would interrupt the flow of the action."



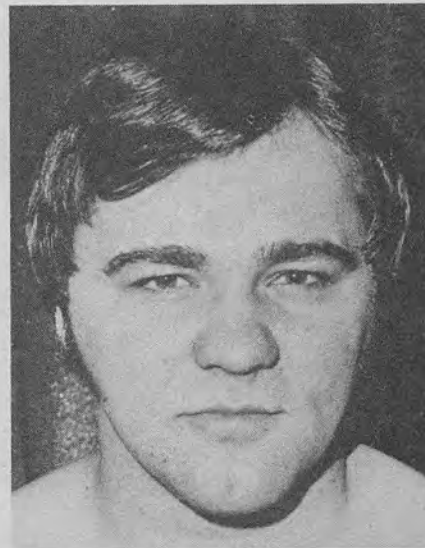
**GORILLA MONSOON**

"As a part-time referee, I know how difficult it is to see everything in just a single match. In a tag team match, it is next to impossible. If there were two referees, it would be easier to control matches."



**GREG GAGNE**

"I like the idea of having two referees in the ring for tag team matches. There is too much going on for one man to see it all. With two men in there, we could have some good, clean wrestling."



**LARRY ZBYSZKO**

"There are advantages and disadvantages to having a second referee in a tag team match. For the time being, I think it would be better to stay with just one official in the ring."



# RS ANSWER OF THE MONTH



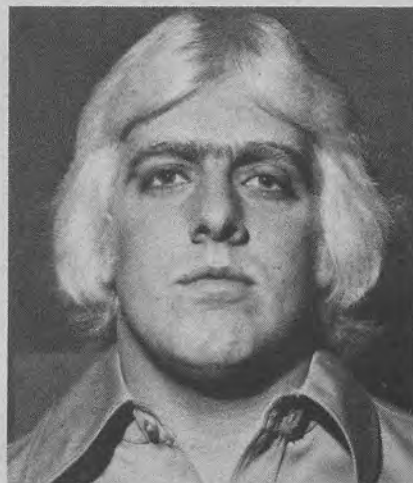
**PAUL JONES**

"The idea of having a second referee in tag team matches is appealing, but basically unrealistic. A second referee would more often than not just get in the way of the action."



**CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW**

"I have been hoping for years that some promoter would start putting a second referee in tag team matches. A second official's presence would put an end to doubleteaming, and that would be very good."



**RIC FLAIR**

"Hell, I don't think there's any need for even one referee. All those idiots do is get in the way when I want to do some real wrestling with my partner. The idea of having two is revolting!"



**MARK LEWIN**

"Sure, I would like to see a second referee in the ring during tag team matches, but I know this will never happen. This is too big a change to bring to wrestling at this time. It will never be in our lifetimes."



**STAN HANSEN**

"One crooked referee in the ring is bad enough. Having two of them is insanity. I think this is the worst idea I have ever heard. I'll wrestle my way, and I won't have any referee interfering in what I do!"



**TONY ATLAS**

"I long for the day when this idea becomes a reality. Two referees in a tag team match would be fantastic! Let us all hope this comes to pass in the very near future." □

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Favorite Wrestler \_\_\_\_\_

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**TRACY WALLING (13)**  
11899 Sandy Ridge Circle  
Mattawan, MI 49071  
Enjoys swimming. Chief  
Strongbow her favorite.  
Likes good guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**MARK COWART (12)**  
6808 Satchelford Rd.  
Columbia, SC 29206  
Likes baseball. Wahoo  
McDaniel his favorite. Likes  
good guys. Anyone for PP's.



**JEFF KOKOSZKA (13)**  
3924 So. Mission Oaks Dr.  
Chattanooga, TN 37412  
Enjoys fishing. Bob  
Armstrong his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**MARC HAMLIN (10)**  
16-45 200 Street  
Bayside, NY 11360  
Likes all sports. Ivan  
Putski his favorite. Likes  
good guys. Anyone for PP's.



**HUGH DALE (16)**  
79 Michael Street  
Iselin, NJ 08830  
Likes ice hockey. Tex  
McKenzie his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Anyone  
for pen pals.



**CARY APPEL (13)**  
24 Mistletoe Drive  
Matawan, NJ 07747  
Likes weightlifting. Billy  
Graham his favorite. Likes  
good and bad guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**WALT PEABODY (14)**  
68 Englewood  
Branch Mark, RI 02610  
Enjoys ceramics. Bobby  
Schaffer his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Boys  
for pen pals.



**TERRI McCOLLEY (15)**  
RR 2, Box 164  
Onamia, MN 56359  
Likes football. Greg Gagne  
her favorite. Likes good  
guys. Boys for PP's.



**FRANK KUNBERGER (19)**  
4401 Lilac Lane  
Chattanooga, TN 37411  
Enjoys the movies. Paul  
Jones his favorite. Likes  
good and bad guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**KENNY SARR (13)**  
1070 Mitchell Ave.  
Cookeville, TN 38501  
Enjoys basketball. Mr.  
Wrestling II his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Anyone  
for pen pals.



**LESTER GREEN (11)**  
19 W. Union Street  
Kingston, NY 12401  
Likes baseball. Ivan  
Putski his favorite. Likes  
good guys. Anyone for PP's.



**PAUL VALENCIA (11)**  
100 Glenwood Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ 07306  
Likes all sports. Bruno  
Sammartino his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Boys  
for pen pals.



# N PALS



**RAYMOND BENNETT (12)**  
2006 Blackrock Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10972  
Enjoys building models.  
Ivan Putski his favorite.  
Likes good and bad guys.  
Anyone for pen pals.



**JOE ROZNOWSKI (10)**  
928 Richmond  
Chicago, IL 60672  
Enjoys wrestling books.  
Dick the Bruiser his  
favorite. Likes good guys.  
Anyone for pen pals.



**BRUCE MISHK (13)**  
89 Saratoga Ave.  
Yonkers, NY 10705  
Enjoys boating. Chief  
Strongbow his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Anyone  
for pen pals.



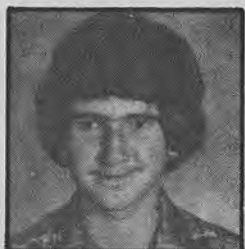
**BILLY HESS (15)**  
2145 Vauxhall Rd.  
Union, NJ 07083  
Likes basketball. Mil  
Mascaras his favorite. Likes  
good and bad guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**JUANITA ROSENBALM (17)**  
Rt 2, Box 70A  
Washburn, TN 37888  
Enjoys art. Mil Mascaras  
her favorite. Likes good  
guys. Girls for PP's.



**IVAN STONEBURNER (56)**  
P.O. Box 562  
Lima, OH 45802  
Likes wrestling magazines.  
Rocky Johnson his favorite.  
Likes good and bad guys.  
Girls for pen pals.



**BARRY CHASTAIN (16)**  
P.O. Box 43  
Lincolnton, GA 30817  
Enjoys motorcycles. Mr.  
Wrestling II his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Anyone  
for pen pals.



**DORIS ANDERS (28)**  
22 Ridgeway Drive  
Greenville, SC 29605  
Enjoys flea markets. Paul  
Jones her favorite. Likes  
good guys. Boys for PP's.



**ELISHA HOYLE (8)**  
22 Ridgeway Drive  
Greenville, SC 29605  
Likes music. Wahoo  
McDaniel her favorite.  
Likes god guys. Anyone  
for pen pals.



**LORI SHEEHA (15)**  
P.O. Box 491  
Cornwall, NY 12518  
Enjoys all sports. Tony  
Garea her favorite. Likes  
good and bad guys. Boys  
for pen pals.



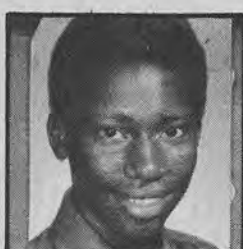
**JOE RIGGIO (15)**  
1950 N. Orianna  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19122  
Enjoys weightlifting. Chief  
Jay Strongbow his favorite.  
Likes bad guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**FLORINE GRANDBERRY (22)**  
2852 Yale Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38112  
Enjoys dancing. Jerry  
Lawler her favorite. Likes  
bad guys. Boys for PP's.



**SHERRI HARRIS (15)**  
Rt 7, Jones Bend Rd.  
Rome, GA 30161  
Likes football. Dick  
Slater her favorite. Likes  
good and bad guys. Boys  
for pen pals.



**ANDRE WILLIAMS (16)**  
1400 N.W. 10th Ave. #3-1  
Miami, FL 33136  
Likes football. Ray  
Candy his favorite. Likes  
good guys. Girls for PP's.



**JIMMIE CURTIS (9)**  
339 Green Street  
Rock Hill, SC 29730  
Enjoys all sports. Jack  
Brisco his favorite. Likes  
good guys. Girls for PP's.



**RANDY DUNN (14)**  
919 Union Street  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
Likes football. Tim Woods  
his favorite. Likes good  
guys. Anyone for PP's.



**TERRI MAYES (20)**  
5717 Newton Ave. So.  
Gulfport, FL 33707  
Enjoys writing poetry. Bob  
Armstrong her favorite.  
Likes good guys. Boys  
for pen pals.



**CHUCK FLYNN (14)**  
6 Branford St.  
E. Norwalk, CT 06855  
Likes auto racing. Billy  
White Wolf his favorite.  
Likes good guys. Girls  
for pen pals.



**NICK LUCIANO (13)**  
362510th Avenue So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
Likes football. Ivan Putski  
his favorite. Likes good  
and bad guys. Anyone for PP's.



**LYNN RUSSELL (13)**  
Rt 1  
Milton, TN 37118  
Enjoys hunting. Andre  
the Giant his favorite.  
Likes good and bad guys.  
Girls for pen pals.



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THE  
AMPHITHEATRE  
CHICAGO

MIAMI BEACH  
AUDITORIUM  
MIAMI

SPORTS  
DALLAS

THE KIEL  
ST. LOUIS

COBURN  
DETROIT

BOSTON  
GARDEN  
BOSTON

THE OMNI  
ATLANTA

THE  
FAIRGROUNDS  
RICHMOND

**E**ASTHAMPTON, NEW YORK—  
I entertained in my summer house early this year. I have earned a vacation, and I plan to enjoy it. However, there's no law that says I can't do some work while I relax. My recent house guest was Ken Patera, a man I've known for quite a while.

Now I realize many readers will immediately wonder how I could ever be hospitable to a man like Ken Patera. They will point out that the man has become a vicious, cruel rulebreaker, that he has no regard for life or limb. They say I should never have welcomed him into my house. But like I have said many times before, I do not care whether a man is a scientific wrestler or a rulebreaker. I can be hospitable to him, and treat him as a fellow human being. But just to ease your worries, let me tell you that I first met Ken in those days when he was a scientific wrestler. He has an open invitation to visit my home here in Easthampton any time he wants to. And I am glad he chose this time to come by. He needed someone to talk to, and he chose me.

Of course, I could not resist the temptation to bring out the tape recorder and interview my house guest. I will always be a reporter at heart, and I could not miss the opportunity to get a good story. I just let Ken sit back in my Barcelona chair and we recorded our conversation. He had a lot to say, and I think you might find it interesting. You might just change the way you feel about Ken.

"Life has not been particularly good for me these past few months," he said. "No matter what people may think, it is no easy thing being a wrestler, especially when all the fans hate you. That is not a problem. I can live without fan approval. I can't live without wrestling. And there are a lot of people who would like to see me leave the sport. But I never will."

"I never intended things to turn out the way they did. When I first became a professional wrestler, I wanted to stay strictly scientific. But like anyone else, I also wanted my share of the fame and glory. It just did not seem to be forthcoming. When I met up with Lou Albano, it



Ken Patera is one of the most hated yet misunderstood men in professional wrestling.

seemed to be the perfect time for a change. It was not an easy change to make, but I did it, and I'm glad. Now more people know who Ken Patera is. Now I'm not wrestling in preliminary events in some two-bit arena lost in the stars. Now I have my fame and glory."

So what else is new? I mean, what Ken was telling me was not surprising. I could understand what he was saying; I had heard it all before from many other men. Ken wanted glory; so did everyone else in the sport. He just found a shortcut to riches, and I could not begrudge him that. I said as much to him.

"That's strange," he replied, "most reporters condemn me for becoming a rulebreaker."

"There's nothing wrong with what you wanted," I told him. "It's no different than what everyone else wants. You just found a different and quicker way of achieving your goals."

"But don't you condemn me for the change in tactics?" he asked.

"I don't really care about what you do in the ring," I told him. "I've known you a long time. I know what kind of person you are away from an arena. That is all that matters. Please correct me if I'm wrong, but aren't you happy now?"

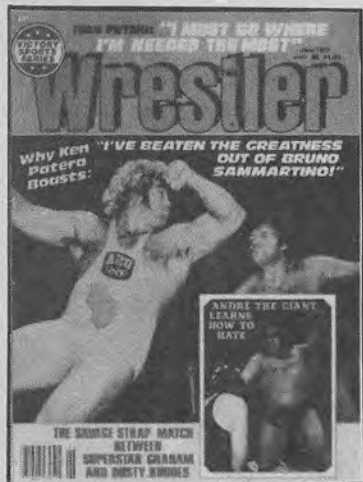
"No, I'm not," he said. "You live in a whole different kind of world when you become a rulebreaker."

(Continued on page 53)

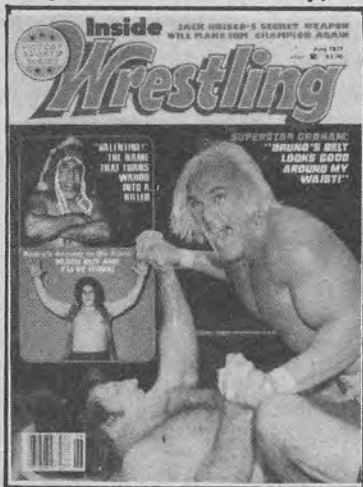


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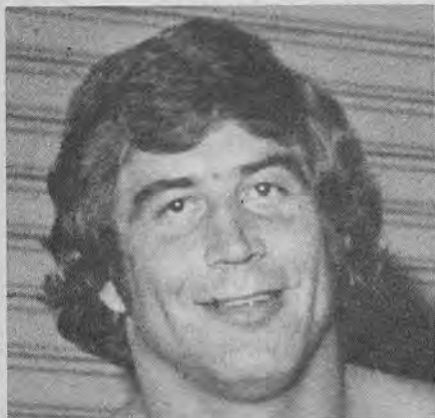
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# NAMES MAKI

The AWA has ordered the immediate suspension of manager **BOBBY HEENAN**. After interfering in a match (in which he smashed a metal chair over the head of **GREG GAGNE**, which resulted in a concussion) AWA President Stanley Blackburn issued the suspension. It is about time someone took action against the AWA's leading troublemaker! . . . After all his boasting about "how easy it will be to take the Missouri State title from **JACK BRISCO**,"



**JACK BRISCO**



**HEENAN & BOCKWINKLE**



**DUSTY RHODES**

**BLACKJACK MULLIGAN** finally got his shot and was soundly defeated by Jack . . . **BRUNO SAMMARTINO** ventured to Texas and made **MIKE YORK** his first victim in that state . . . **DUSTY RHODES** had one of his dreams come true. He just upset **BUDDY WOLFF** to take the Florida state title. Next on Dusty's list—**NWA** champion **HARLEY RACE**.

**SUPERSTAR GRAHAM** is doing everything in his power to avoid a proposed New York City confron-



**PEDRO MORALES**



**BOB BACKLUND**

tation against the sensational **BOB BACKLUND**. Experts feel young Backlund has all it takes to win **Graham's** **WWWF** championship . . . **RIC FLAIR** is rumored to be splitting with **GREG VALENTINE** . . . **LORD AL HAYES** claims **PEDRO MORALES** is "not the great wrestler everyone thinks he is. He is slow, fat, and ugly, the exact opposite of myself!" . . . **JERRY LAWLER** failed in his latest attempt to regain the Southern title he lost to **BOB ARMSTRONG** . . . **ROCKY JOHNSON** is discussing the formation of a tag team with good friend **BOBO BRAZIL**.

Look for **PETER MAIVIA** to make a strange announcement concerning his future in the **WWWF** . . . **JERRY BRISCO** says **SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK** approached him, wanting to manage his career. "It was the first time I ever spit in someone's face!" says Jerry . . . Would **ERNIE LADD** ever end his feud with **OX BAKER**? "No way!" exclaims Ernie. "Baker and I are natural enemies. I will *never* stop trying to rid wrestling of Mr. Ox Baker!" . . . Congratulations to the



# N' NEWS

Bill Apter  
reporting...

team of GREG GAGNE and JIM BRUNZELL. They have been named tag team of the year... TOM JONES is in California hoping to stop RODDY PIPER and his army.

Handsome TONY ATLAS came within seconds of pinning BLACKJACK MULLIGAN for the U.S. title. If the time limit had not run out, most observers agree that Tony would be wearing the belt... BOBBY DUNCUM was beaten bloody by RAY STEVENS... PROFESSOR TANAKA and MR. FUJI cannot get a clearcut victory over TONY GAREA and LARRY ZBYSZKO... HAYSTACKS CALHOUN is doing guest referee duty on the East Coast... TULLY BLANCHARD, son of "Joltin" JOE BLANCHARD, is making waves in Florida... TERRY FUNK has signed for a rematch against AWA champion NICK BOCKWINKLE... ROGER KIRBY claims "I am the most underrated man in the sport. I have beaten *all* the so-called great champions and still I cannot get into the top 10 ratings!"

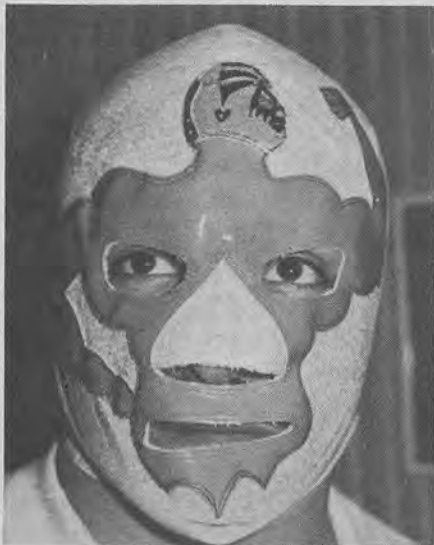
ANDRE THE GIANT just won \$20,000 in a battle royal and donated every penny of it to charity!... BARON SCICLUNA has gone off to vacation on his native island of Malta... IVAN PUTSKI says he received a threatening letter from SPIROS ARION who is wrestling in Australia. In the letter, Arion warns Putski he is coming back to the WWWF and is going to break Ivan's face. As you may recall, the two had a big feud several years ago... JIMMY SNUKA has left the Seattle area and has settled in Texas where he is a big favorite... CARLOS ROCHA is moving back into the Canadian mat wars... BARON VON RASCHKE has taken his reign of terror to Japan... A steel plate fell out of STAN HANSEN'S elbow pad when he tried to catch DICK MURDOCH with the lariat...



**DICK MURDOCH**

MIGHTY IGOR and DINO BRAVO refuse to team up—and they also refuse to tell anyone why!

EDDIE GRAHAM must be congratulated for doing such a fine—and impartial—job as NWA president. Recently his son MIKE GRAHAM was brought before the NWA for hitting a referee during the heat of battle. Eddie smacked a



**MIL MASCARAS**

\$200 fine on Mike—as he would do to any wrestler who committed the same infraction... THE DESTROYER, who now restricts his wrestling to Japan, is contemplating a tour of the U.S... MIL MASCARAS would love to team up



**BUTCHER VACHON**



**MR. WRESTLING II**

with MR. WRESTLING II... BUTCHER VACHON does not like several remarks JOE LeDUC has made about the Butcher's sister, VIVIAN VACHON (Who is the wife of BUDDY WOLFF). So Vachon is headed South to "shut LeDuc up once and for all!"

That's all the news for now. See you next month! □

There are times when a journalist feels compelled to take a stand. Crusading reporter Randy Gordon writes of his hatred for Ric Flair not out of anger but from a sense of justice. Perhaps Flair will cease to be what he is and become what he can be—one of the great scientific wrestlers of all time

# "I HATE RIC FLA

**A** REPORTER is not supposed to let his feelings show. The idea is to just be a neutral observer of the passing scene. You report exactly what occurs without fear or favor. That's the way it is supposed to be.

Rules are made to be broken. There comes a time when a man must speak his mind, even if it flies in the face of convention. It's not something a reporter likes to do; at least the good ones don't like to do it. However, circumstances don't often leave much of a choice. I have no choice.

## I HATE RIC FLAIR!

The words are purposely made to stand out on the page. I want the world to see them unadorned and without qualification. When a man makes a statement like that, he shouldn't give himself a place to hide. Hatred is the ugliest word in the language. When it's used, all its power must be allowed to stand alone.

Ric Flair is a man who generates hatred in all those who love wrestling. He drags the sport's majesty through the gutter by his cruelty. Decent, fine athletes are maimed and crippled by his ruthless tactics, designed not for victory but for

slaughter. He is using the sport to cloak his savage maulings. The man belongs in an alley on a Saturday night, not in a wrestling arena.

But I despise Flair not for what he does but how proficiently he is doing it. Of all rulebreakers, there is something especially vicious about the way he rips into an opponent. His accomplishments rank with the most reprehensible in the annals of this sport. When watching Flair, one realizes this is a man who could kill without batting an eyelash.

The real tragedy of this situation lies not in the fact of Flair's savagery, but in the waste of a great athlete's talent. Flair has the ability to be one of the great wrestlers in history. He has the physical capabilities to do anything. It's in his power to advance the sport beyond its current boundaries, explore new frontiers of maneuvers and tactics. The difference between the wrestler today and his potentiality must make all who love the sport weep. Flair is not only a disgrace to the sport, but to himself. That is the greatest disgrace of all.

I've lived too long to believe in the permanence of anything.



Flair can change. He has the ability. If he will change, is another question. If I thought there was a decent chance Flair would become a scientific wrestler, I wouldn't hate the man. But the words "decent" and "Flair" are difficult to put in the same sentence.

The purpose of this article is to inform Flair how I and thousands of others feel. We hate him for what he wastes and what he could be. We hate him for the many men who have suffered from his maiming tactics. And we hate him for what he does to the honor of wrestling.

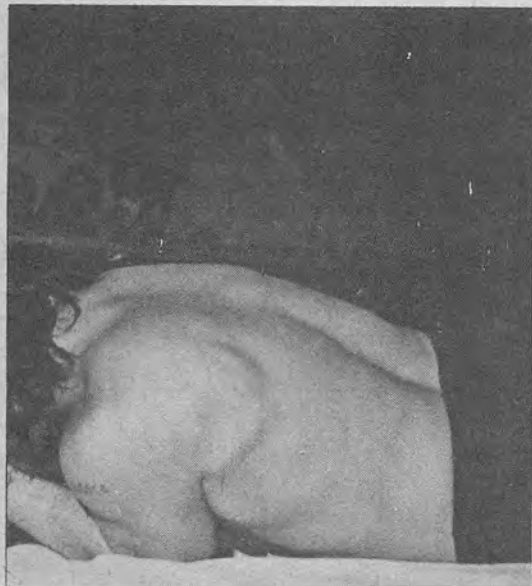
If he reads this, and understands the depths of our hatred, there is a slim hope he'll change his ways. However, a slim hope is more than enough



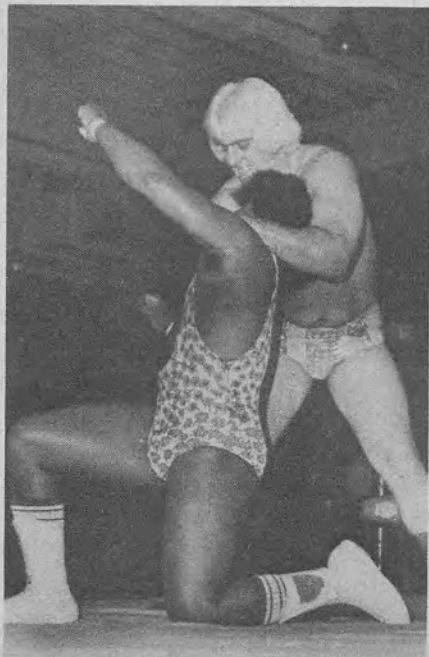
# IR"

BY RANDY GORDON

PHOTOS BY BILL JANOSIK



Flair passes a foreign object to his friend Blackjack Mulligan (above). He has no shame as he chokes poor Tiger Conway (below). Ric Flair (right) is a man I truly despise!



reason to go out of one's way to try changing Flair. It would benefit Flair, his hapless opponents, and the sport itself. Any opportunity to avert tragedy must be taken.

These are perilous times for wrestling. The rulebreakers control the sport. Newcomers, seeing how others succeed, are also becoming rulebreakers. The best wrestlers of our generation are being destroyed

by ambition. Only the extraordinary few can keep from adopting illegal tactics. And no sport can survive on just a handful of honorable men.

Flair's awesome success is a lesson all wrestlers are considering. His victories speak of the gains one can enjoy by cheating and battering. He is one of the main reasons rulebreaking wrestlers are

*(Continued on page 48)*

# NEWS FROM THE WRESTLING CAPITALS



Tiger Jeet Singh proves he can be as maniacal as The Sheik when he attacks the crazed Arab before the opening bell. However, Singh's rally was not enough to insure a clear victory over his hateful opponent.

**TORONTO, ONTARIO—**  
**Correspondent: Keith Gibbs—**  
Tiger Jeet Singh clashed with the U.S. Champion, The Sheik, at Maple Leaf Garden. Singh wrestled courageously as he took full charge of the match from the onset. He proved he could be just as vicious as Sheik as he bit the Arab's forehead, kicked him low, and punched.

In a state of panic, Sheik fled from the ring and returned with a wooden chair. He began to batter Singh with it and finally broke it over his head! When the referee tried to hold Sheik back so he could restore order, the Arabian madman slugged him! That caused The Sheik an immediate disqualification.

Ken Patera stopped Gorilla Monsoon... Chief Jay Strongbow

demolished Pat Kelly... The Crusaders whipped Reggie Love and Don Kent... Al "Kangaroo" Costello drew with Chris Tolos.

**DALLAS TEXAS—Corre-**  
**spondent: Alan Wabakken—**The Sportatorium was the site of the match between Bruiser Brodie and the great Andre the Giant. The match got underway with a series of scientific maneuvers by Andre. But that didn't last long as Brodie began a vicious assault with a series of kicks and kneedrops. Andre lost his temper and picked the huge Brodie up and hurled him across the ring! Then Andre used a flying bodypress, trying to end the match. Luckily for Brodie, his legs were under the ropes, so the referee couldn't count him out. Desperate for a way out, Brodie rose to his feet, kicked Andre low and that lead to his disqualification.

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 38, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571.

**WINNIPEG, MANITOBA—**  
**Correspondent: Bill Matthes—**

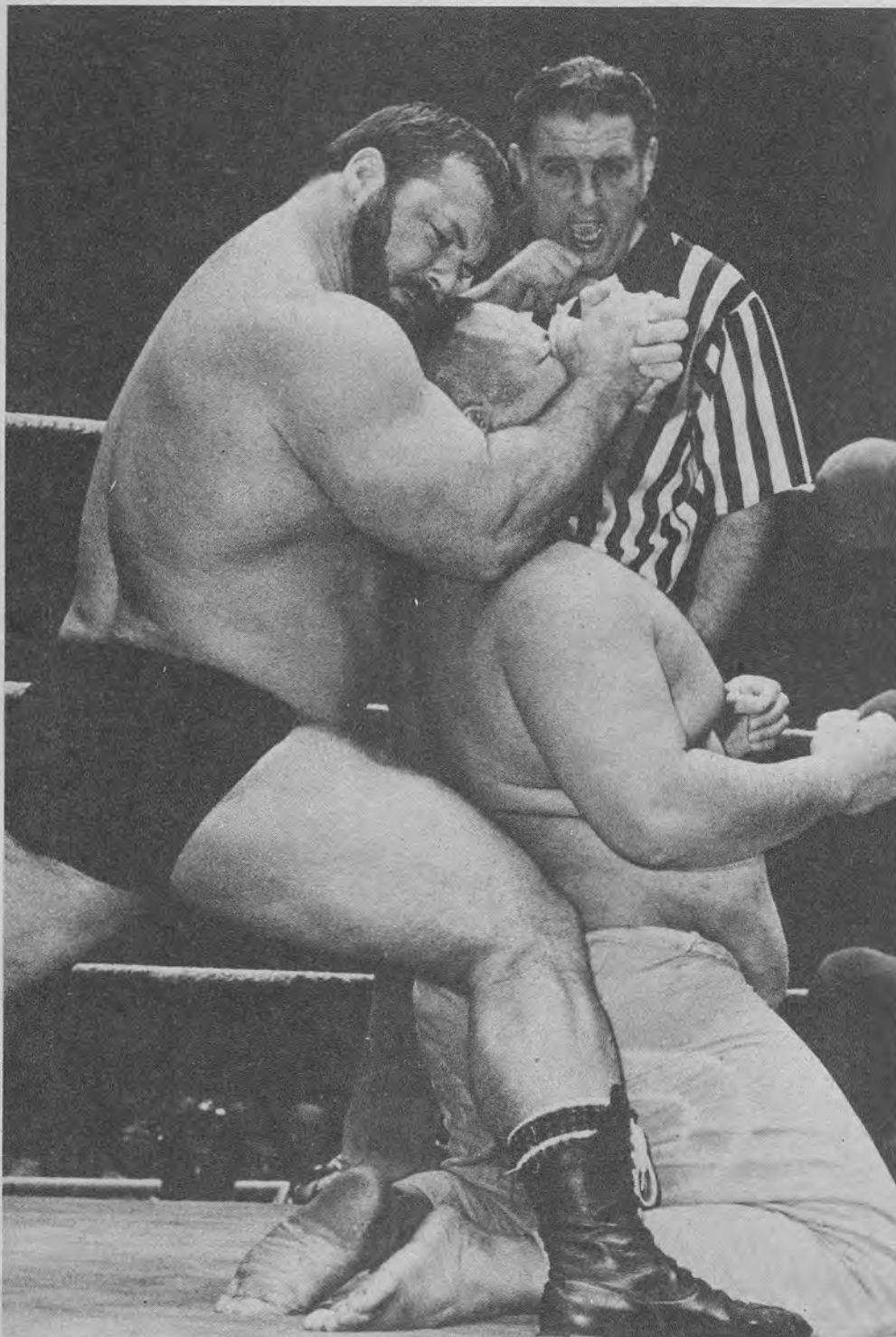
A brutal strap match between Peter Maivia and Angelo Mosca highlighted a sensational show. Mosca came into the ring a 5 to 3 favorite as his weight, 315 pounds would work for him. It would be difficult for Peter to drag all that hulk around the ring, touching all four posts in order to win the match. But Maivia proved he was not handicapped by the weight advantage as he bloodied Mosca, knocked him unconscious and dragged Angelo around the ring to win.

In a great six man tag team match, Ray Stevens, Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell topped Nick Bockwinkel, Bobby Duncum and Blackjack Lanza... Lord Al Hayes was disqualified against Pedro Morales... Billy Robinson stopped Roger Kirby... Billy Francis drew with Moose Morowski.

(Continued on page 46)



More and more often, Ivan Putski finds himself disqualified. The man is wrestling out of control. The reasons behind it are many and few agree to all of them. Read the story and then make up your own mind



Referee John Stanley warns Ivan Putski to make sure he keeps a legal chinlock on Tor Kamata. Stanley was afraid Ivan might be tempted to turn it into a choke hold. Putski seems to be letting his temper get the best of him in recent bouts.

**T**HE LOCKER WAS mangled, the benches overturned, the training table lay on its side. Alone in the dressing room, Ivan Putski was on a rampage.

Outside, wrestlers and friends listened through the door to the smashing and crashing. Nobody wanted or dared to interfere. Besides, people had become used to these tempter tantrums. For the last couple of months, it's become a common occurrence for Putski.

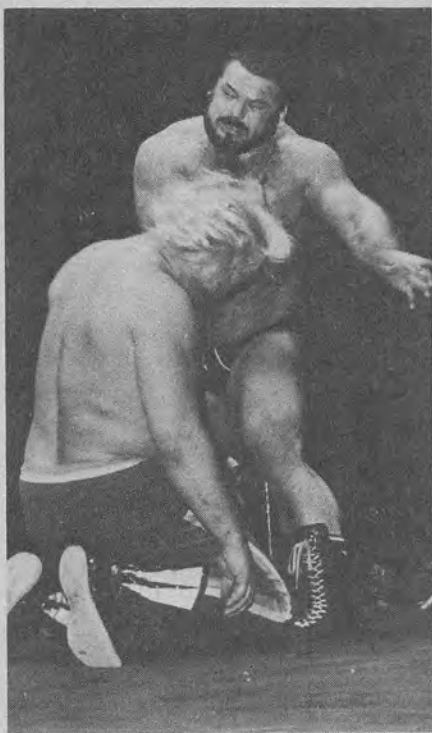
Another match, another disqualification. After the disqualification comes the tantrum. Actually, the rage in the dressing room is just an extension of what occurred in battle. Ivan loses his matches by using reckless tactics sure to earn him a disqualification.

Ivan's rulebreaking is not the product of premeditated cruelty. He doesn't use perfected cheating

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

**WHAT'S  
WRONG  
WITH**

**IVAN PUTSKI?**

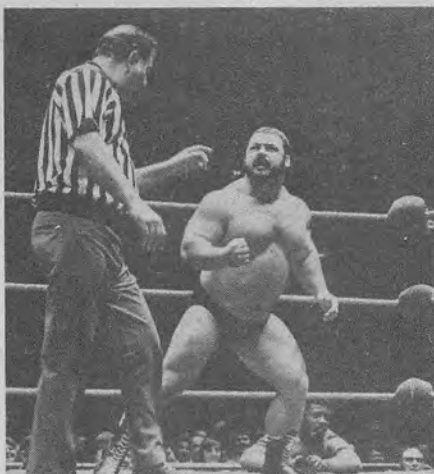


maneuvers. If he did, his moves might go undetected more often. He goes outside the rules only when his rage becomes uncontrollable, something that is happening more and more often. Ivan Putski is a warrior out of control.

No one can say when this first started, what match marked the beginning of his disturbing wildness. In a general way, the disqualifications coincide with his decision to wrestle in both NWA and WWF areas. Many people feel this could be the cause.

As one friend—who wishes to remain anonymous—explains, “Do you realize the pressure this man must endure? It isn’t tough enough for him to struggle toward one title. The man has to go against two of the toughest men around. Ivan is taking on all kinds of different, dangerous wrestlers. That’s an unbelievable amount of physical and mental punishment. Considering what he’s been through, it’s a miracle the man controls himself as well as he does.

“The man believes he’s on a mission to save the WWF and NWA from the rulebreakers. The fans love him for it and the promoters love to have him. It’s



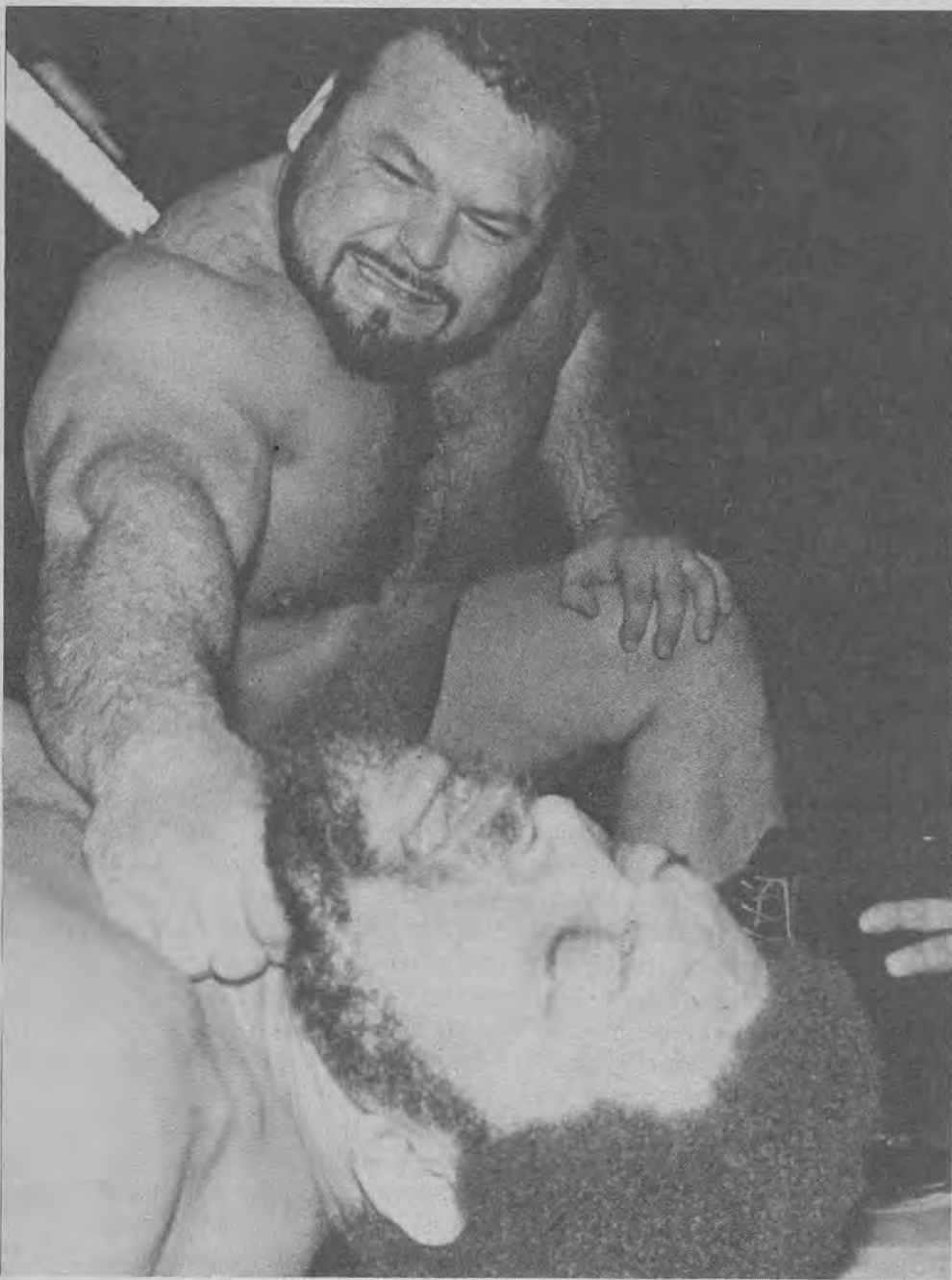
Ivan goes berserk (left) as he slugs Moondog Mayne. Against one of The Executioners (above) Putski punches so hard, the masked man is lifted off his feet!



Ivan lets all his violent feelings show as he smashes his hated enemy, Stan Hansen (below). The Polish star is about to be disqualified against Ernie Ladd (right).







impossible for any man to live up to all his obligations and keep calm and poised. He's trying too much and he's paying the price. He may be failing to gain victories, but this has been the most courageous demonstration of heroism I've ever seen."

There are men who consider Ivan less than heroic, almost pathetic. They see the man as struggling mindlessly toward an impossible goal, one which can never be reached. They consider this unprofessional, and that is unforgivable. His frustration at not being able to succeed accounts for the loss of temper and

subsequent disqualifications. Putski has driven himself past the limits of control into the wild frontier of dangerous abandon.

Professionals succeed only when they operate within their limits. No matter what some may claim, all wrestlers know they are incapable of doing everything. They must pace themselves, never too much too often. Some wrestlers claim scheduling is 30% of victory. Putski, ignoring that his body and mind must rest, goes after anyone without proper preparation. This insures failure, which to many professionals doesn't make sense. And with the failure comes

frustration, unintentional illegal moves, and disqualification. Putski brings it all on himself.

At least that's the opinion of many. They point to matches against Ken Patera, Baron Von Raschke, Seig Stanke, Blackjack Mulligan, Bruiser Brodie, Stan Hansen, and Ernie Ladd. It would take any other professional years to prepare for these difficult, complex matches. Putski took them in a matter of months. "That makes the man an idiot, not a hero," Bruiser Brodie said, summing it up for those who agreed with him.

Half the sport thinks Putski is a crusader. The other half laughs at his madman antics. Whatever one considers Ivan, the fact remains he is reeling under the inhuman pressure. Match after match is being sacrificed to disqualifications. Instead of getting closer to the titles, he is aiding rulebreakers in proving themselves contenders. His quest is accomplishing exactly the opposite of what he hopes to do.

No one knows this more than Ivan. So he spends the minutes after a bad match destroying dressing rooms. Yet, all the broken lockers in the world won't change the results of what happened. Putski was still disqualified and no closer to dominating the sport. And a little bit more of his poise crumbled and his nerves jangled worse than ever.

Despite the entreaties of fans and colleagues, Ivan is intent on continuing his inhuman schedule. He will either succeed against all odds or be destroyed in the attempt. When asked why he tortures himself like this, Ivan refuses to say anything. He doesn't have to say anything. To find the answer, look at the man's face when the crowd applauds him. The man is transported into a joy few will ever know. And for that moment of love, Ivan risks everything.

Love can kill. □

# SHOULD WE PRINT THE STORY THAT WOULD MAKE JACK BRISCO CHAMPION AGAIN?

**T**HE LIGHTS WERE turned on. The editors of this magazine sat staring ahead at the blank screen. As long as nothing was said, no decision would have to be made.

"There's no doubt about it," someone said. "It would take one page of type to make Jack Brisco champion."

"It's incredible that no one spotted it before," another added. "Once you know what to look for, it's as plain as the nose on an anteater's face. There are two maneuvers Harley Race is incapable of defending against. Jack Brisco is a master of those maneuvers. And it only takes a short, simple series of moves to set Race up for the kill. Even my baby daughter could maneuver Race into a position for defeat. How come no one noticed it before?"

"It's amazing anyone found it at all," a third countered. "Unless the series of maneuvers is viewed from a certain angle, the vulnerability is hidden. I'd

say it's a thousand to one chance of the camera being in the right place at the right time. It's not apparent enough to be seen by the human eye. We had to play it twice in slow motion to see it."

There was a silence for a long time. What had been seen could change the NWA. Harley Race would fall to Jack Brisco, making Jack the new NWA champion. The proof of the film made that a foregone conclusion. All it would take to depose Race would be for this magazine to print the findings.

"Well, what do we do?"

The question hung in the air. The magazine must remain impartial, never consciously favoring one wrestler over the other. Printing Race's weakness would certainly hurt Harley and help Brisco. Yet, we're also obligated to the facts. To satisfy that duty, we should publish our knowledge.

"The problem," someone pointed out, "is that only one person can really benefit from

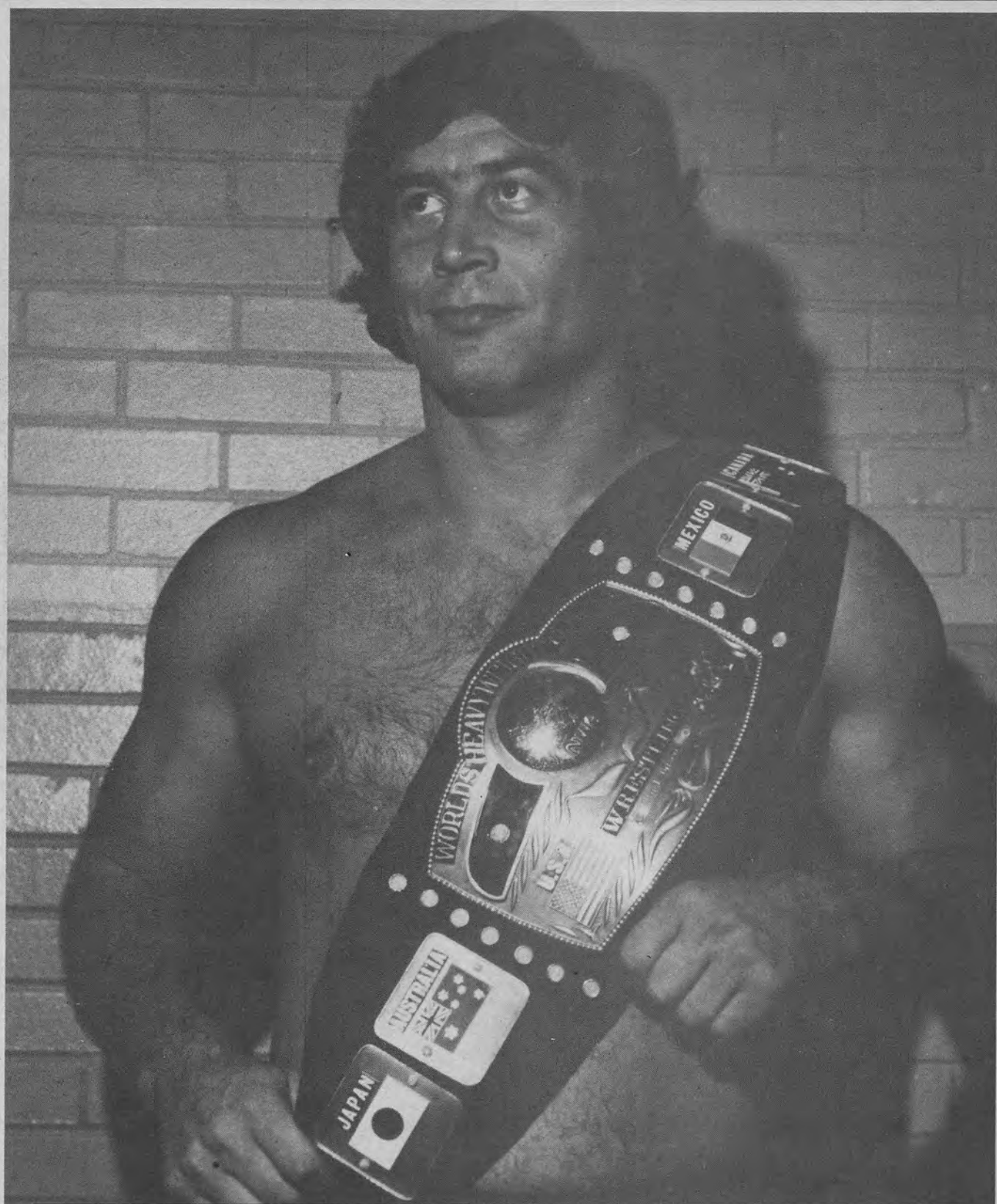
what we know. If this was general information, then there'd be no question but that we'd print it. But the difficulty is that Brisco is the only man who can gain. We would be favoring Brisco over Race, which is unfair. Then again, if we don't print it, that's favoring Race over Brisco."

"Not really," someone argued, "there's a difference between publishing something that will hurt someone and holding back something that may hurt. When you publish, there is a direct interference with events. By not publishing, events go on as if you weren't there. That's closer to being impartial."

"I'm not quite sure," said the first speaker. "If someone needs medicine to survive, and you purposely withhold the medicine, though you haven't really done anything, you're responsible for killing the person. That's when doing nothing is doing something. By not printing what

*(Continued on page 54)*





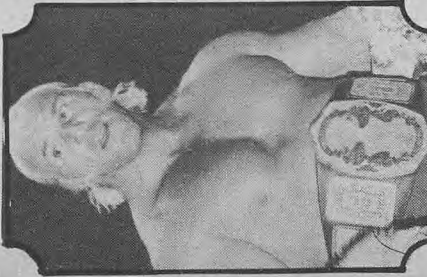
**It is in our power to make Jack Brisco champion again. We can end the reign of Harley Race with a few paragraphs. We can do it. But should it be done?**

# INSIDE WRESTLING'S

# OFFICIAL RATINGS

These Ratings Are Compiled With The Assistance Of Top Wrestlers, Promoters, And Reporters. They Are Universally Accepted As Official

## World Wide Wrestling Federation



Champion:  
SUPERSTAR GRAHAM



1—BRUNO  
SAMMARTINO

## American Wrestling Association

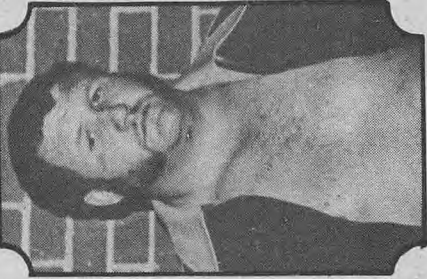


Champion: NICK  
BOCKWINKLE



1—BILLY ROBINSON

## National Wrestling Alliance



Champion: HARLEY  
RACE



1—TERRY FUNK

## Most Popular Wrestlers



1—DUSTY RHODES

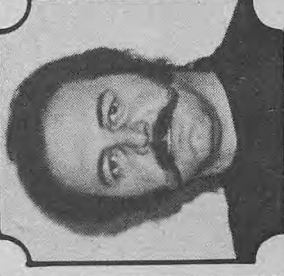


2—BRUNO  
SAMMARTINO

## Tag Teams



1—THE ANDERSON  
BROTHERS

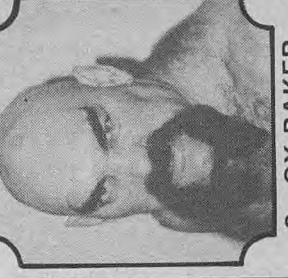


2—OX BAKER

## Most Hated Wrestlers



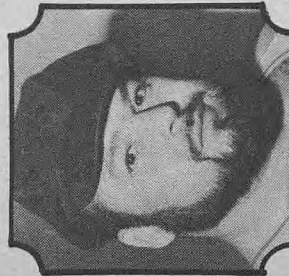
1—THE SHEIK







2—BOB BACKLUND

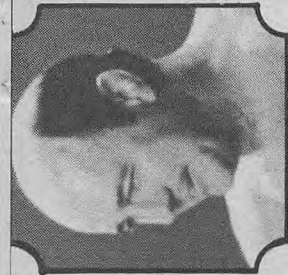


3—IVAN PUTSKI

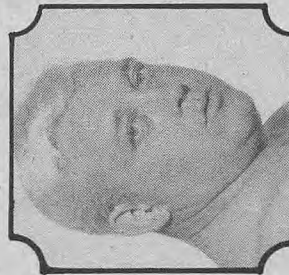


4—CHIEF JAY  
STRONGBOW

- 5—PETER MAIVIA
- 6—KEN PATERA
- 7—BARON VON  
RASCHKE
- 8—TONY GAREA
- 9—GEORGE STEELE
- 10—LARRY ZBYSKO



2—VERNE GAGNE



3—RAY STEVENS



4—GREG GAGNE

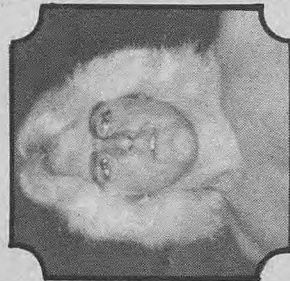
- 5—JIM BRUNZELL
- 6—PEDRO  
MORALES
- 7—SUPER  
DESTROYER
- 8—LORD AL HAYES
- 9—LARRY HENNIG
- 10—ANGELO MOSCA



2—DUSTY RHODES

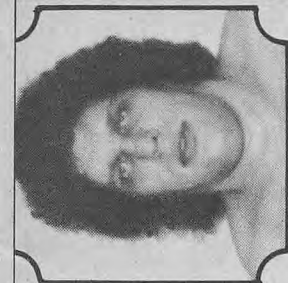


3—JACK BRISCO



4—RIC FLAIR

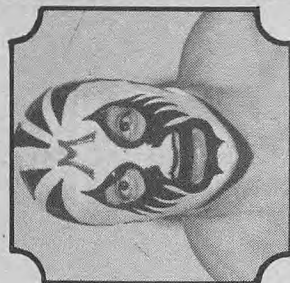
- 5—PAUL JONES
- 6—DORY FUNK JR.
- 7—IVAN KOLOFF
- 8—THE SHEIK
- 9—MIKE GRAHAM
- 10—STAN HANSEN



3—ANDRE THE  
GIANT

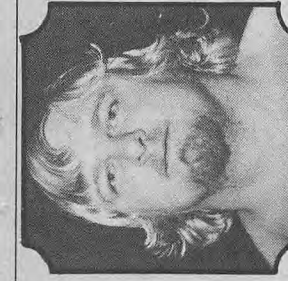


4—BOB BACKLUND

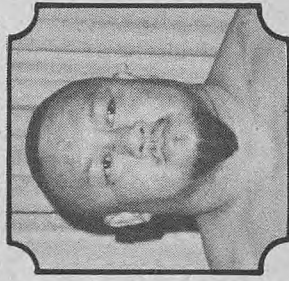


5—MIL MASCARAS

- 6—MR. WRESTLING  
II
- 7—IVAN PUTSKI
- 8—PAUL JONES
- 9—BILLY ROBINSON
- 10—MIGHTY IGOR



2—BLACKJACK LANZA  
& BOBBY DUNCUM



3—PROFESSOR  
TANAKA & MR. FUJI



4—CHIEF JAY  
STRONGBOW & BILLY  
WHITE WOLF

- 5—RIC FLAIR &  
GREG VALENTINE
- 6—JACK & JERRY  
BRISCO
- 7—THE VALIANT  
BROTHERS
- 8—VERNE GAGNE  
& CRUSHER
- 9—GOLIATH &  
BLACK GORDMAN
- 10—GREG GAGNE &  
JIM BRUNZELL



3—ABDULLAH THE  
BUTCHER



4—KEN PATERA



5—STAN HANSEN

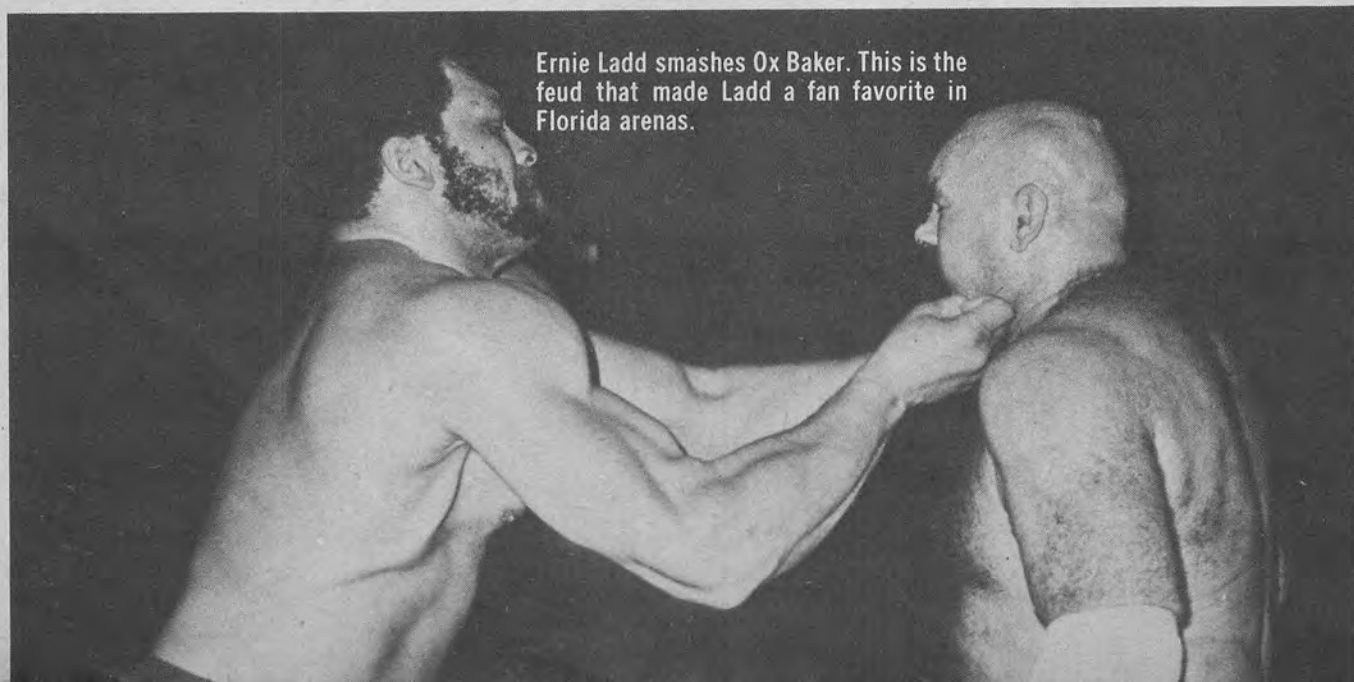
- 6—RODDY PIPER
- 7—BRUISER BRODIE
- 8—SUPERSTAR  
GRAHAM
- 9—NICK  
BOCKWINKLE
- 10—BLACKJACK  
MULLIGAN



**T**HE LETTER LAY crumpled on the desk. Moments before, its contents had turned the promoter red with rage, a state in which he remained while summoning his secretary.

"That glandular case will never wrestle again!" he screamed, while the secretary quickly fetched a Bromo. "Do you know what he's done to me! Can you believe it? I'll kill him! No, killing is too good for him!"

# **WHY ANDRE THE GIANT BACKED DOWN FROM A CHALLENGE**



Ernie Ladd smashes Ox Baker. This is the feud that made Ladd a fan favorite in Florida arenas.

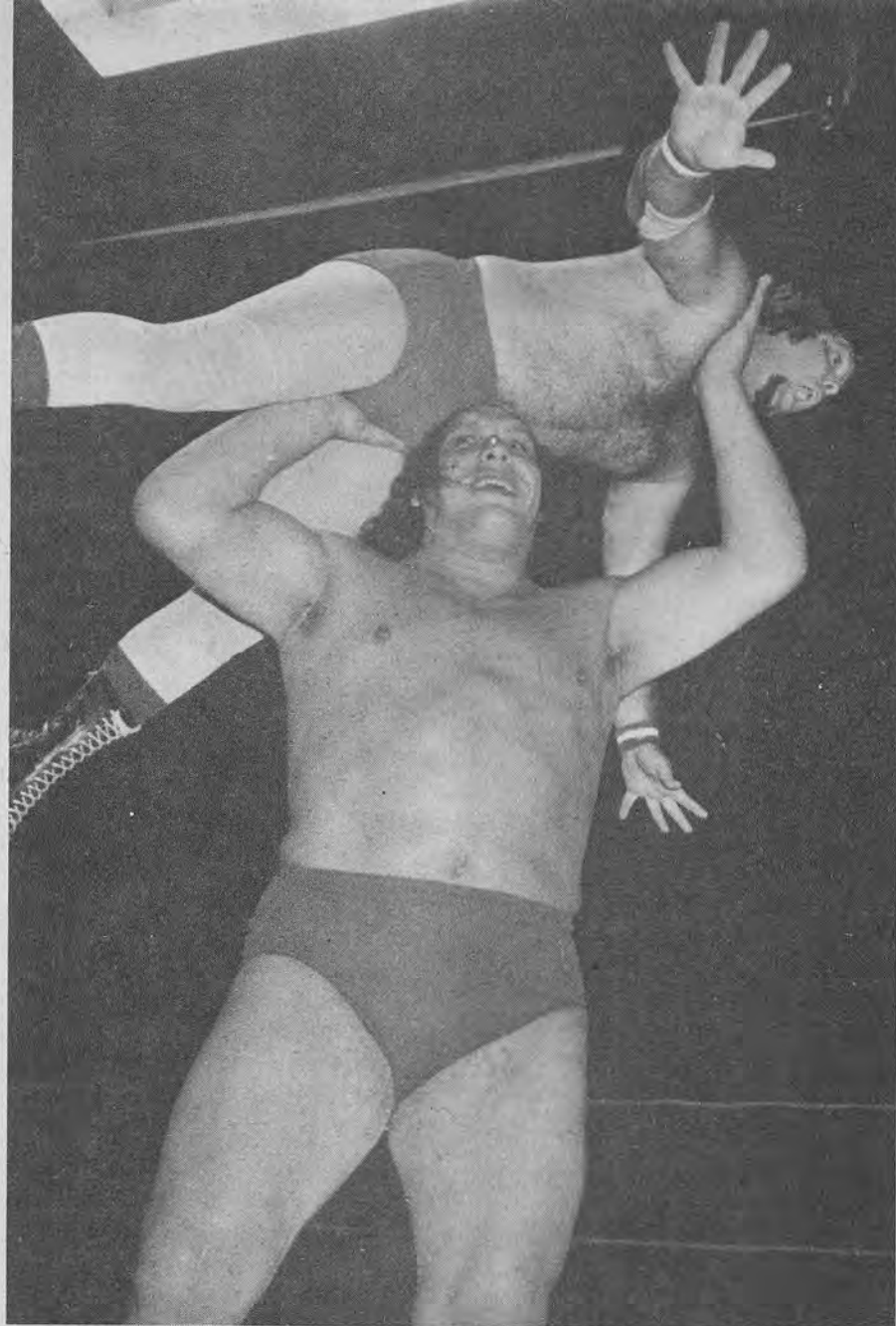


At this point, the man sprang up from his desk and began pacing back and forth. During one of his crossings he grabbed the Bromo from his secretary's outstretched hand and downed the glass in one gulp. His traversings halted for a moment. One belch later, he continued ranting.

"How can he do this to me, the man who is most responsible for his success?" Because the secretary wanted to keep her job, she didn't ask how the promoter had aided Andre the Giant. "After all, I've done this for him, this ungrateful gargantuan stabs me in the back. Well, do you know what I think of him? I'll show you what I think of him." And with that, the promoter tore Andre's letter into as many pieces as he possibly could. "There! I close the iron door on him, now and forever!"

The letter, when it had been in 187 fewer pieces, had informed the promoter Andre would not wrestle Ernie Ladd, as had been scheduled many months before. The letter stated since Ladd has become a popular grappler, using scientific methods to earn the respect of fans, Andre didn't want to meet him. The giant respected Ladd's change of tactics and wanted to do nothing to jeopardize it.

Andre offered to wrestle any other grappler the promoter chose. He stated, sensitively and at some length, how crucial those few months could be in determining Ladd's future. A match against Andre could change the man's present direction. The Giant doesn't want to be responsible for that.



Instead of wrestling Ladd, Andre cancelled his commitment against him and accepted a challenge for a rematch against Jerry Lawler. Although he had his hands full in this match, Andre emerged victorious.

When the promoter calmed down—two days later—he quickly went to work on finding an opponent for Andre. The "iron door" opened when the man realized the Giant could garner him a fortune. Principles never interfered with the man's pocketbook.

So it came to pass Ernie Ladd wrestled Ox Baker and Andre battled Jerry Lawler. They were two superb contests. Baker and Ladd showed the fans what brutal wrestling can be. They tore into each other with cruel abandon, attempting to cripple

*(Continued on page 56)*

**Andre the Giant refuses to wrestle Ernie Ladd. Here are the reasons behind Andre's pronouncement, printed for the first time. Prepare to be shocked!**



Backlund gets off the mat to foil Race's kneedrop attempt (above). Bob enters the ring to the cheers of the fans (below).



**T**HE JET WAS halfway between here and there. Dinner had been deserved. A few passengers turned off their overhead lights to sleep. Bob Backlund returned to his seat after getting another cup of coffee. The reporter sitting next to him was still working on his after-dinner brandy.

"Do you know," the reporter asked, "what's the best month of the year?"

"April," Backlund replied, "because that's when everything's starting to grow and the world looks bright green."

"Wrong, optimistic friend. The best month is October when the world's aflame with color just before dying."

"Okay," Backlund continued, "what's the best time of day?"

"About two a.m. The world has an eerie quiet about it, and the few people around are mysterious and possibly dangerous."

"Wrong. Best time of the day is a half-hour before dawn. Watching the sun rise slowly over the horizon, listening to the world wake up, everything turning different colors as the sun goes from red to yellow,

that's the best time in the world to be alive."

"In what city do you find the best food?"

"The most varied types of food or the best tasting?"

"In what city do you put something into your mouth and have your tongue know it's the happiest it's ever been?"

"You'll laugh." "Probably." "I like my mother's cooking the best." "So do I." They both laughed.

And while we're on the subject," the reporter continued, "what's the best match you've ever wrestled?"

"Against Harley Race," Bob replied without a moment's hesitation.

"Don't you even have to think about it?"

"Nope. That was my best. Everything was done correctly, from devising the strategies to execution. It all worked perfectly. Of course, I worked hard enough for it to be perfect.

"I must have studied films of Race against 20 different opponents. It got to the point where I could prefect whatever Race would do in any situation. I

*(Continued on page 58)*

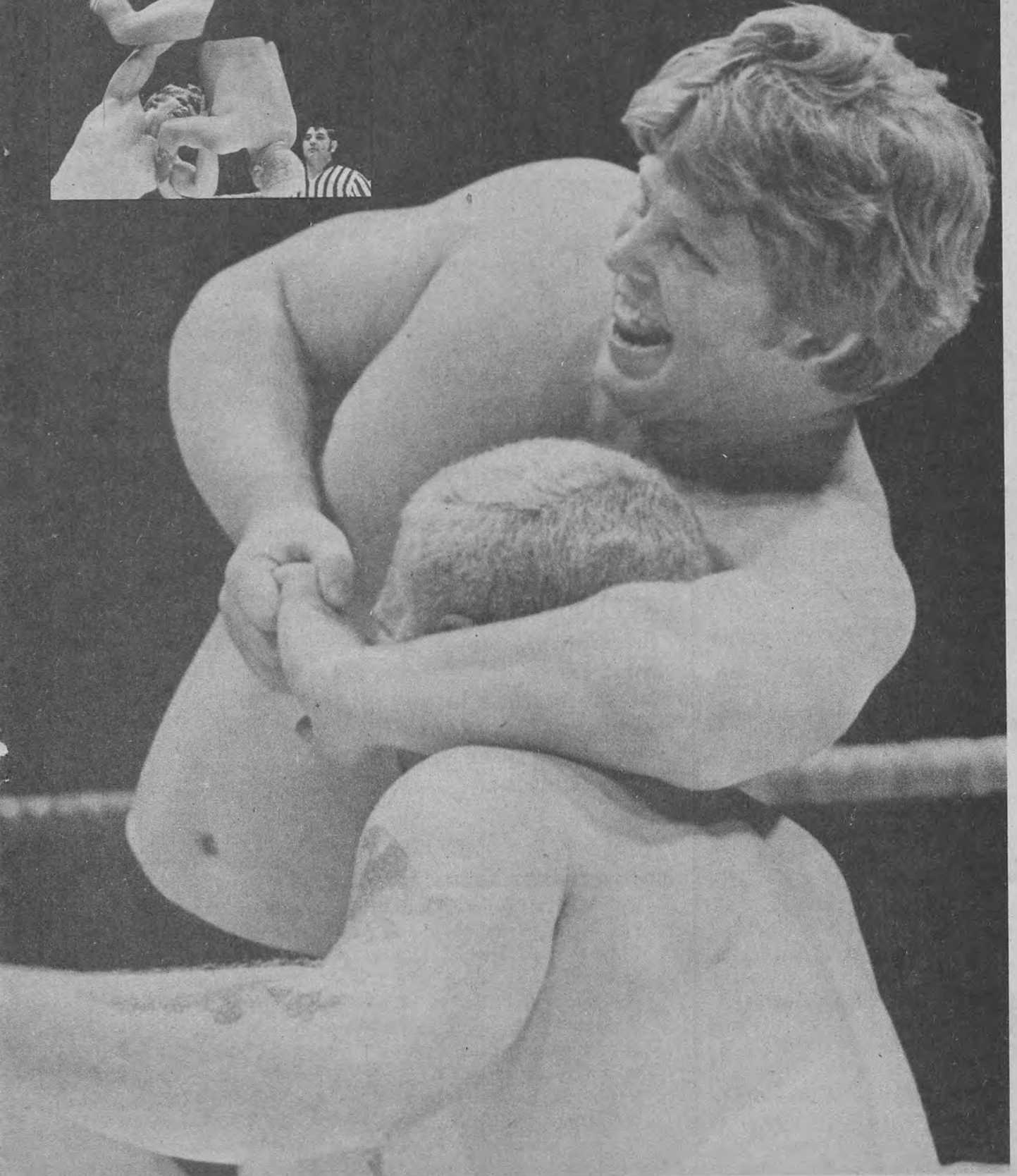
PHOTOS BY BOB RUIZ

# THE NIGHT BOB BACKLUND MOPPED THE FLOOR WITH HARLEY RACE

Why does Bob Backlund consider his victory over Harley Race the best of his career? The answer to this provides the most insightful look into the grappler's personality ever printed



Bob slams Race off his perch (insert) and slams him to the mat. A vise-like headlock has Harley unable to retaliate. Without a doubt, this was Backlund's best match.



# HOTSEAT

## MIL MASCARAS: "I AM THE BEST!"

**N**O MAN IN wrestling is more popular with fans all over the world. He has battled the most vicious men in the sport, and he has always emerged triumphant. He has also garnered great success in business affairs and in the movies in his native Mexico. He is poised, skillful, powerful, articulate. He is a wonder to watch in action. His aerial tactics are the best. He is a legend in his own time. He is Mil Mascaras.

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY  
MICHAEL B. KAPE

**Q:** Welcome back to the Hotseat. We are very happy you agreed to sit a second time for an interview.

**A:** It is a rare privilege to be on the "Hotseat" once. To be asked back for a second time is very flattering indeed.

**Q:** Over the past few years, you've been through a lot. You've reached new heights; you've discovered new depths. Yet you are back on top again. How do you explain this?

**A:** I'm a survivor. Good times, bad times, I've seen them all. But I'm still here. I've been everywhere over the past few years. I've encountered all kinds of opponents. For a while, my career took a

decided nosedive. I was nearly paralyzed. I couldn't function. It became nearly impossible for me to wrestle. But with a little help from my friends. I came back.

**Q:** During all those bad times, did you ever consider giving

---

“  
**My skills carried me through the worst of times. I also have been blessed with a large group of loyal fans. They have been very helpful.**  
”

---

up wrestling to work exclusively in the movies?

**A:** I often considered it. There was only one thing which prevented me from making that move—the fans. I have an obligation to them, and I intend to carry it out.

**Q:** Isn't there one special obligation?

**A:** Are you referring to Pamela Collins?

**Q:** Yes. How did the whole thing come about?

**A:** I met her through this magazine's "Win a Mil Mascaras Mask" contest. Her mother wrote the entry, explaining that Pamela was a mentally retarded child, but she was able to recognize me. That was both flattering and touching. I decided to go out and meet this girl. However, she was not well at all. I promised I would never leave wrestling. I tried to visit her a second time, but she died a few days before I could make it back. Since that time, I have never forgotten my promise to her. Whenever things look bad, I simply have to remember Pamela Collins.

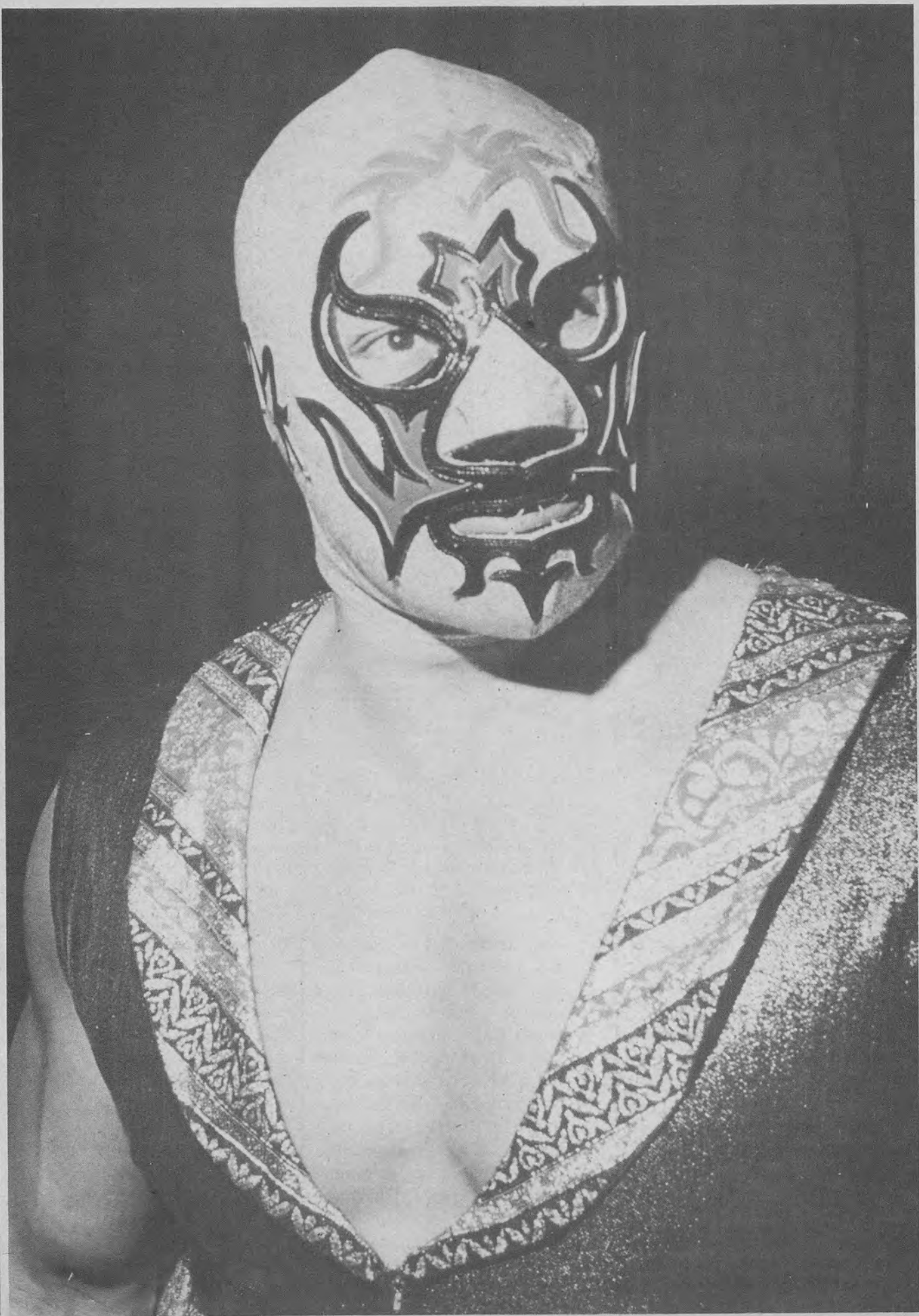
**Q:** And that helps you go on?

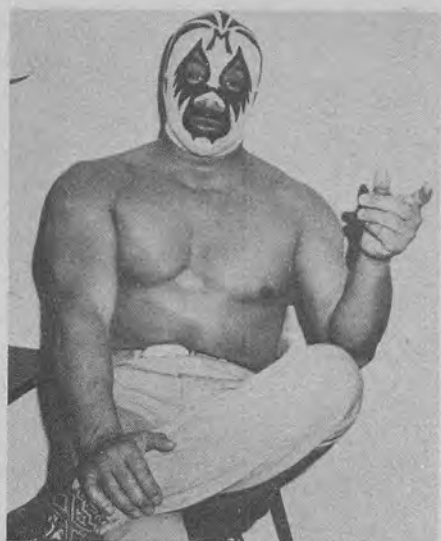
**A:** Pamela's courage is an inspiration to us all.

**Q:** You made a vow to unmask before the end of this year. Do you still intend to follow through with that?

**A:** That all depends on what happens in the coming months. If you remember, I made that vow dependent upon winning the NWA title from Terry Funk. But Funk is no longer champion. I've had







“

**There are many people who want to see me wrestle. I intend to be in places where they can do so.**

”

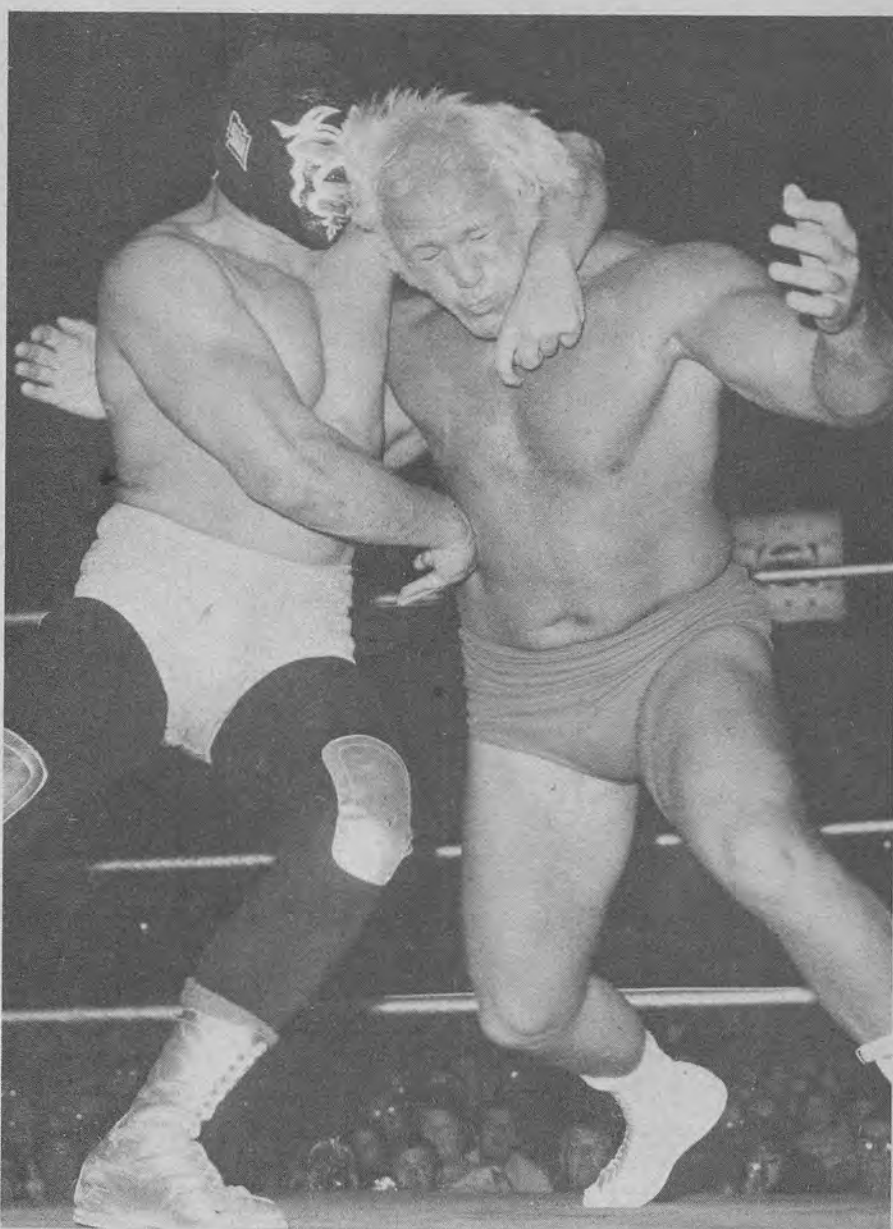
to readjust everything. I don't know if I will be unmasking this year. It is still too early to say.

**Q:** Do you intend to unmask even if you don't win the belt?

**A:** I don't know. I doubt it. I once said that I would retire from the sport the day my mask came off. That may still be true. No man should be held to every single statement he makes.

**Q:** You said before that you were a survivor. Why do you think you managed to survive when other men did not?

**A:** I'm very lucky. I have been blessed with great talents and abilities. I have learned how to use them. In all modesty, I can truthfully say that I am the best. I don't want that to sound like a boast. It is not



**Mil wrestles Superstar Graham in 1970. Mascaras would love to wrestle Superstar now that the blond rulebreaker is in charge of the World Wide Wrestling Federation championship.**

easy to say. But look at what has happened over the past few years. I have been down and out, but I managed to climb right back to the top. My skills carried me through the worst of times. I also have been blessed with a large group of loyal fans. They have been helpful. But I wouldn't have a single one if it weren't because I knew what I was doing. Many men don't have these advantages. I have been very lucky.

**Q:** Do you really believe that?

**A:** Yes, I really do.

**Q:** All right, you say you are the best. Define that.

**A:** With all due modesty, I think I am the top man in the profession right now. I really don't want to dwell on this.

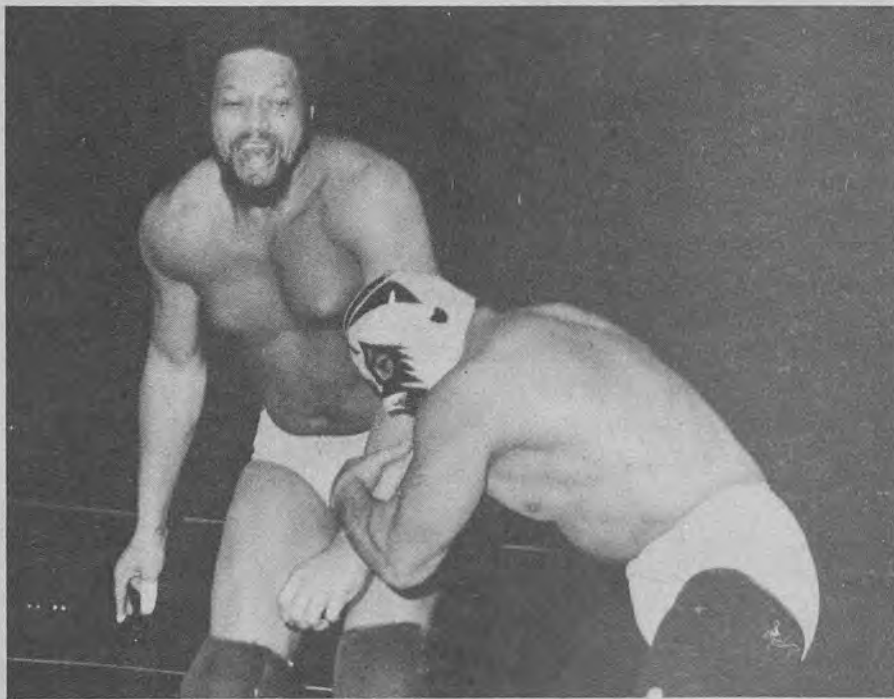
**Q:** But it is important. It is rare when any man can truly claim he is better than anyone else in his field. How can you justify the claim?

**A:** Who's better?

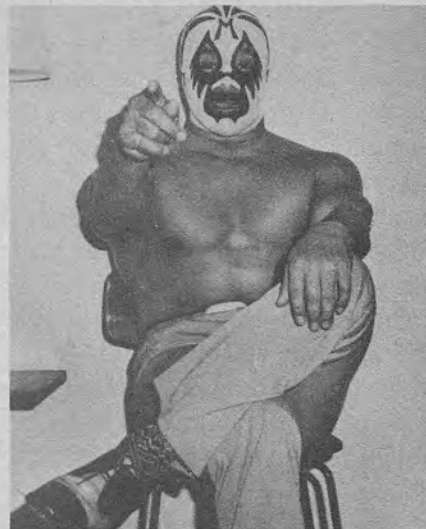
**Q:** I can't think of anyone at the moment. But I know some people might mention Bruno Sammartino.

**A:** Not since he lost the WWF





Ernie Ladd becomes a Mascaras victim (above). One of his greatest matches was against Ivan Koloff (right). Mil battled Koloff in a bout most experts consider an all-time classic.



**“  
I’ve been everywhere  
over the past few years.  
I’ve encountered all  
kinds of opponents.**

**”**



title. And that was bound to happen sooner or later. If I had wrestled him, I think I would have defeated him.

**Q:** I must agree with you there.

**A:** And that is the way of the world.

**Q:** Let’s leave philosophy out of this. Tell me, if you had the chance to do it all again, would you still have wrestled with a mask, or would you have shown your face to the world from the beginning?

**A:** There’s no question about it. I would still wear the mask. In many ways, the mask has been one of the biggest aids to my career I could have had. The mask created a certain mystique. I don’t believe I would have been as successful as I am without it.

**Q:** And what comes next for you?

**A:** I am not sure yet. I would like to win a major world championship, but I’m not going to

die in the effort to do so. I definitely will continue to wrestle in arenas around the world, seeing as many of my fans as I can. I owe it to them.

**Q:** Isn’t that being just a bit egotistical?

**A:** Yes, I suppose it is. Let me put it a different way. There are many people who want to see me wrestle. I intend to be in places where they can do so. I would like to win a world title. If I don’t, I won’t be too upset. I know there are other things I can do to please the fans. Is that better?

**Q:** Yes, it is. I would like to thank you for spending time here on the “Hotseat.”

**A:** It certainly has been an experience. And it certainly was not easier the second time around. In fact, I don’t think I’ve had such a difficult interview in a long time. Just out of curiosity, why are you so hard on me?

**Q:** I like to get right to the heart of the matter. I think we did that. Wouldn’t you agree?

**A:** Yes, I suppose you’re right.

**Q:** Again, I thank you for coming here.

**A:** You are quite welcome. I can’t say it has been a complete pleasure, but it has been interesting. I just hope I don’t regret anything I’ve said today. □

**I**T WAS DECIDED. What was the point of going on, anyway? Bruno Sammartino was seconds away from picking up the telephone and putting an end to his wrestling career.

The night before, Bruno tossed sleeplessly in bed. Should he retire now or go through the agonizing process of trying to regain the title. No one knew better than Bruno how much the system favors the champion in retaining a title. It's much harder to win the belt than

keep it. Was it worth the ordeal again?

Bruno decided the time had come to call it quits. His body, after years of absorbing incredible punishment, deserved the rest. Sammartino spent the morning feeling retired, seeing what kind of sensations come from relaxation. He lay back on the couch and closed his eyes. Having no worries any longer, Bruno dropped off to the best sleep he'd enjoyed in years.

When he awoke, he dawdled

over making and drinking a cup of coffee. He wondered what the coming years would mean for him. Bruno knew the different way people treated current and retired athletes. How would he react to the slight patronization retired athletes always suffer? Well, he'd have to get used to it.

His journey to the telephone was interrupted by the ringing doorbell. Shocked to realize he was relieved at the interruption, Sammartino answered the door.



**What possible connection can there be between a small crippled boy and one of the greatest athletes on earth? After reading this, you will understand why the wisest men of all say a child shall lead them**

# **HOW A CRIPPLI CHILD SAVED SAMMARTINO**



When he saw who had come, Bruno's face broke out into a wide smile. There stood John Commins, a boy who's had braces on both legs since he was three. The lad was now 11 years old. He grew to worship Bruno when the grappler had been hospitalized for a broken neck. Since his hospital stay, Bruno returns regularly to the hospital to visit the children. John is one of the special ones whom doctors say benefits most by Bruno's attention.

Sammartino was surprised to see the young boy, but there were many more surprises to come.

"I wanted you to see," John announced, his eyes sparkling. "If it wasn't for you, this couldn't have happened." With that, the boy let go of his companion's hand and took a step.

It was awkward, clumsy, covered no more than a foot, and was the most beautiful thing Bruno had ever seen. Then the boy took another, then another. Each step was a trial, each movement exhausting. But still the boy continued, enabled to walk by the magnificence of human spirit. In all, the boy took 15 steps. He crossed the room on his own. Bruno ran to John's side after the journey was over. The boy was soaked with sweat. Added to that was the wetness of Bruno's tears. Both of them, and the boy's companion, were weeping with joy.

"I did it because of you," John cried, "you showed me it could be done. I never believed I could walk,

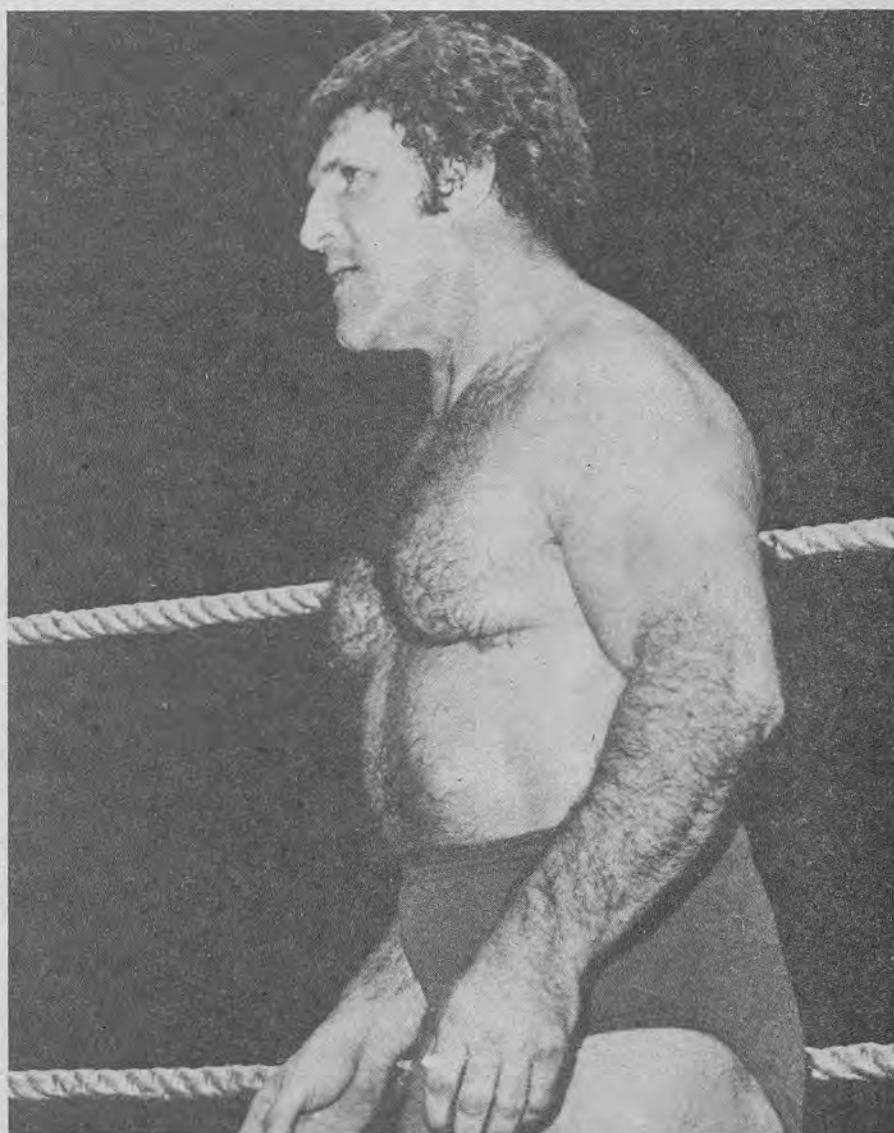
the doctors said I couldn't walk, and my life would be spent in a wheelchair. But then it happened. Even after you suffered a broken neck, you came back. I saw what you did and knew I could conquer my injury. You proved yourself champion. I can walk. I proved I can walk. And someday I'll run! Because of you, I'll run!"

The three people talked for awhile and then it was time to go. Before they left, Bruno asked the companion (outside the boy's

hearing), "What chance does he have to walk normally?"

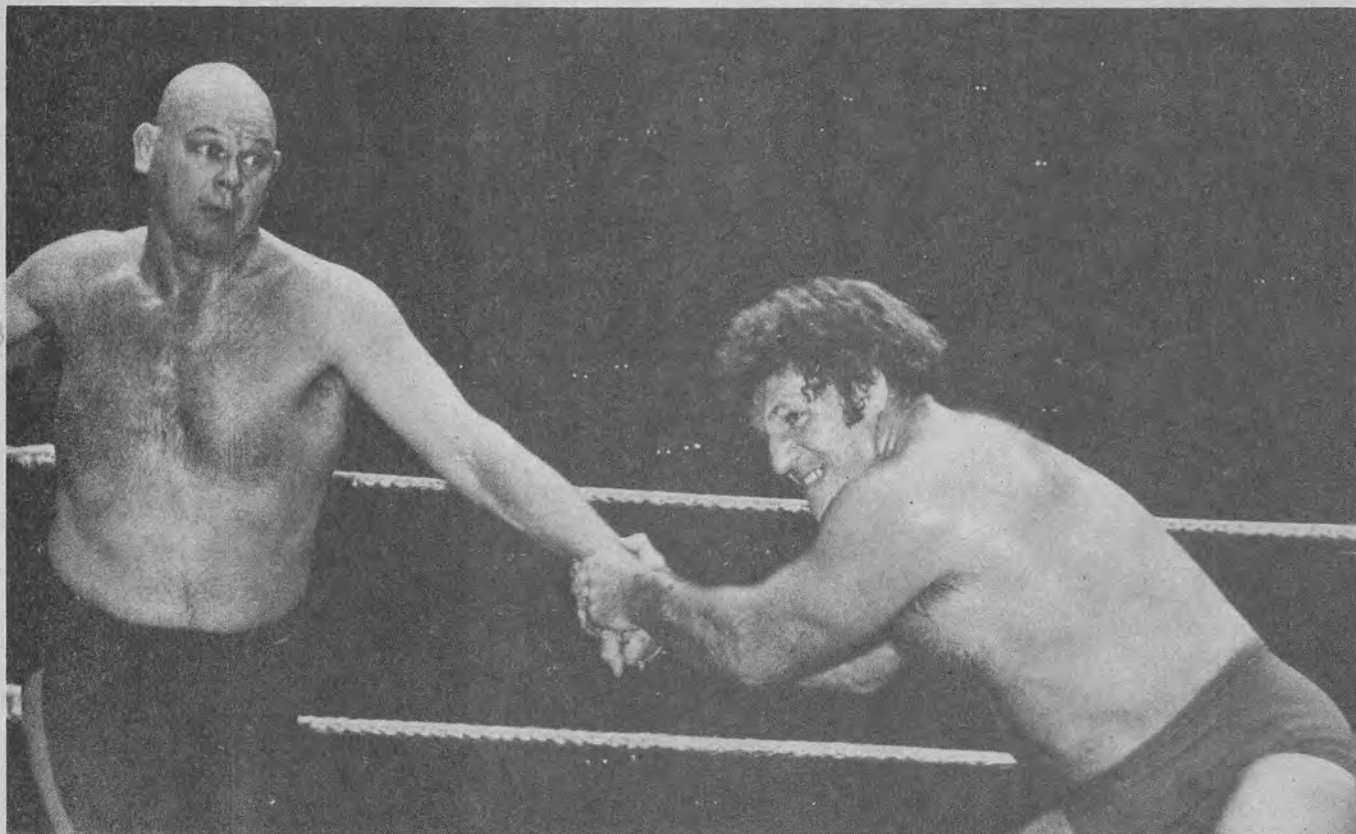
"They said he could never walk at all," came the reply. "How can you put any limits on a boy that does the impossible? As long as you prove to him quitting doesn't make sense, he'll make progress. I wonder how many other boys like John you've helped by being what you are? It must be a wonderful feeling."

It was a wonderful feeling. Bruno got on the phone and called

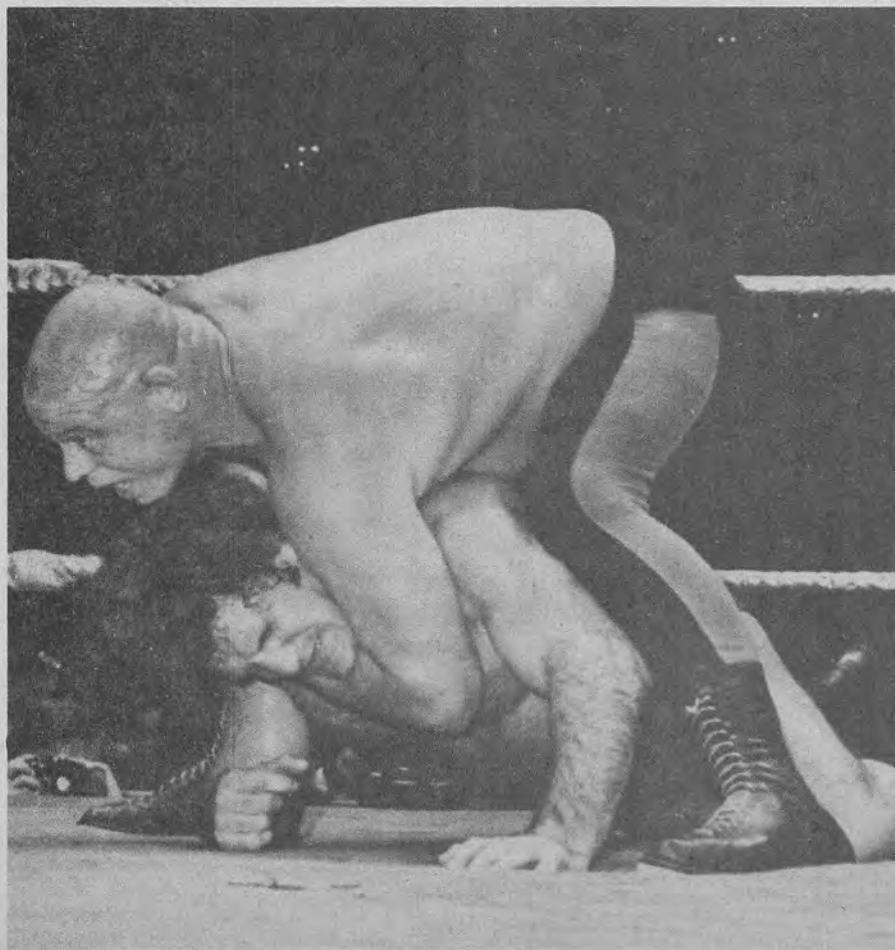


PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

# ED BRUNO S CAREER



Bruno whips Baron Von Raschke across the ring (above). It's a tough moment for Sammartino (below) as the feared German chokes him. Bruno's drive to go on after having his neck broken inspired a crippled youngster to do more than any doctor thought he could.



the promoter. Only he didn't announce his retirement.

"Give me Von Raschke," Bruno announced. The promoter complied.

The match was a week later. Sammartino dominated the action, tearing into Von Raschke like a man possessed. Baron used every dirty trick in the book to get himself disqualified, just as Bruno knew he would. No matter what happened, Bruno conquered his foe's cruellest moves.

Watching in a ringside seat was John Cummins. He saw Von Raschke cheat in vain. John realized, as Bruno knew he would, that no matter what is thrown in your path, it can be conquered. Sammartino was victorious in more ways than one. With his sweat and blood, he made it just a little easier for a crippled child to have hope.

The next day, Bruno received a call from John. The boy wanted to tell him he had walked 23 steps, a record for him. Bruno said, "It's nice talking one champion to another. We're two men who know you just can't quit.." □



# INSIDE WRESTLING

14

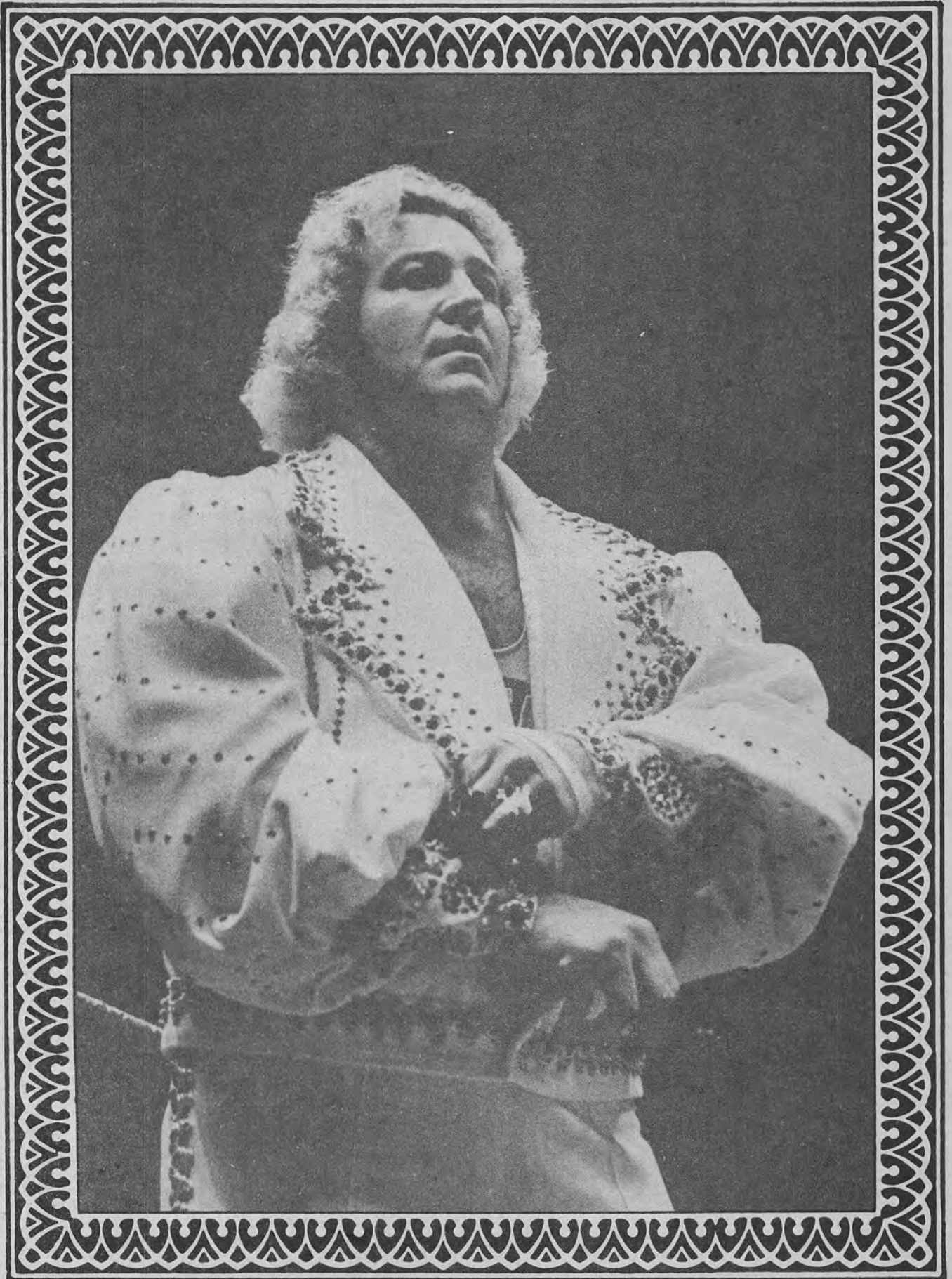
## capsule profile

### KEN PATERA



**H**E IS CONSIDERED the strongest man in wrestling by many people, and very few people are willing to challenge that claim . . . Became a wrestler after he represented the United States in the Olympic Games . . . In many ways, he is one of the most talented young men in the sport . . . Though once strictly a scientific wrestler, he has become a rulebreaker in recent months (*"Yeah, I break a few silly rules. So what?"*) . . . He knows many maneuvers, but he chooses to rely mostly on his strength to win matches . . . As a rulebreaker, he has defeated many of the top men in the WWF (*"I want them to be afraid of me, and they are!"*) . . . Is known mostly for his victories in single matches—he rarely wrestles in tag team battles . . . Has been known to revert to his scientific ways when the opportunity presents itself, which is quite rare . . . Under the guidance of manager Lou Albano, he has become a savage competitor (*"The Captain taught me how to really wrestle. I don't like to remember that nonsense I was doing before."*) . . . He has the potential to be a champion someday, though his methods toward achieving that end are still questionable. □

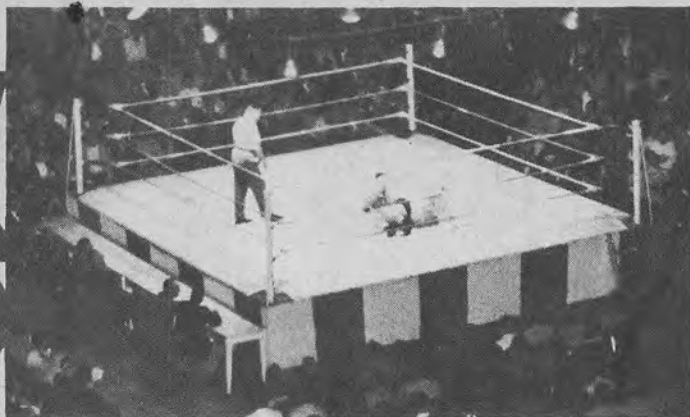
## CAPSULE PROFILE PINUP



KEN PATERA



# SINCERELY YOURS



## IGNORE HIM

After reading George Steele's comments on the "Hotseat" (July 1977), I think I have found the perfect solution to this menace. Ignore him. From the interview it became clear that the man craves attention. He has found he gets this attention by the fans hating him. Fine, if that's how he wants it.

But I don't particularly want to satisfy Steele's crazy longings. He has made many fan favorites suffer. Now it is time he should suffer. If the fans would just

If George Steele (above) is ignored, one fan believes it might change the "Animal's" way of life. Has the popularity of Bruno Sammartino (right) decreased since he lost the WWWF title to Superstar Graham?

ignore him, he would not be able to function. Soon he would be forced to leave wrestling altogether. Or else he would have to change his ways and become a scientific wrestler. Either way, ignoring Steele would be the best fans could do for the sport.

JANE POSTEN  
Erie, Pa.

## SLIPPING

I realize he lost the championship, but I don't think he has lost that many fans. Therefore, I find it difficult to believe that Bruno Sammartino has slipped to the number four position in popularity in your July issue's "Official Ratings." Number four? I find this hard to accept. Have that many people deserted him? I hope not.

Now I am not one of those raving fanatics who live and die as Bruno's fortunes rise and fall.



I think he is the best wrestler in the sport. That is a conclusion I arrived at after very careful consideration. I do not consider Superstar Graham's victory over Sammartino to be a clear-cut one. And I think Bruno will be able to regain his belt.

So I find it difficult to understand how Bruno could

*(Continued on page 62)*

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## WRESTLING CAPITALS

(Continued from Page 24)



Dusty Rhodes (above) almost took Harley Race's NWA title. Andre the Giant (above right) teamed with Dutch Savage (right) and together they opposed a three man team!



### ST. PETERSBERG, FLORIDA— Correspondent: Mike Hernandez—

Dusty Rhodes had a chance to win the NWA Heavyweight title at the Bayfront Center. The match started with Dusty charging out of his corner, slamming Race and trying for a quick pin. But Race kicked out. Then Dusty used a piledriver on the champion. Again he tried for the pin—and again Race kicked out. Next Dusty tried four elbow smashes. The last one sent Race on a trip outside the ring. Dusty followed him and kept up the attack, but he did not realize the referee had started counting. Dusty's try for the title this time ended in a double countout.

WWWF Champion Superstar Graham retained his title in a hard fought contract against Joe LeDuc. Graham has made it known that he is willing to put up his title in a match against Harley Race's belt.

Jack and Jerry Brisco won by disqualification over Buddy Wolff and Butcher Vachon . . . Mike Graham stopped Dutch Mantell

. . . Pat Patterson was victorious over Raul Mata . . . Kevin Sullivan drew with Gordon Nelson.

### SEATTLE, WASHINGTON— Correspondent: Jeffrey Somask—

A record crowd filled the Seattle Center Arena to witness an unusual match. In one corner, the three man team of Chris Taylor, Jesse Ventura and Playboy Buddy Rose. Opposing them a two man team, Dutch Savage and Andre the Giant. After each team split a fall, it was a real free for all in the final stanza. Savage and Taylor were both bleeding profusely. Taylor tagged Ventura who hit Dutch with a foreign object. Savage fell to the match unconscious and Jesse finished him. Andre came in as Taylor and Rose helped Ventura continue to pummel Savage. The Giant took matters into his own



hands and cleared the ring. Ringside officials informed the referee of what Venture had done. They decided that it would be unfair to award the match to Ventura's team. They were officially disqualified and Andre and Savage declared the winners.

**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA—Correspondent: John Erkert**—Superstar Graham defended his title against Chief Jay Strongbow at the Spectrum. As the bell rang, Strongbow went berserk, ripping Graham's shirt as he was trying to take it off, and choking the champion with it. Then he caught Graham in a sleeper hold and it looked like the end for the champion. Luckily for Superstar he was near the ropes. He grabbed



Chief Jay Strongbow got his long-awaited shot at the WWWF title held by Superstar Graham.

the second strand and the referee forced a break. Graham took charge as he elbow smashed Strongbow and sent him flying over the top rope. Ten seconds later Graham had retained his title.

Ken Patera and Bruno Sammartino were both disqualified in their match . . . The same verdict was declared between George Steele and Haystacks Calhoun . . . Chief Maivia battered Nikolai Volkoff. □

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## "I HATE RIC FLAIR"

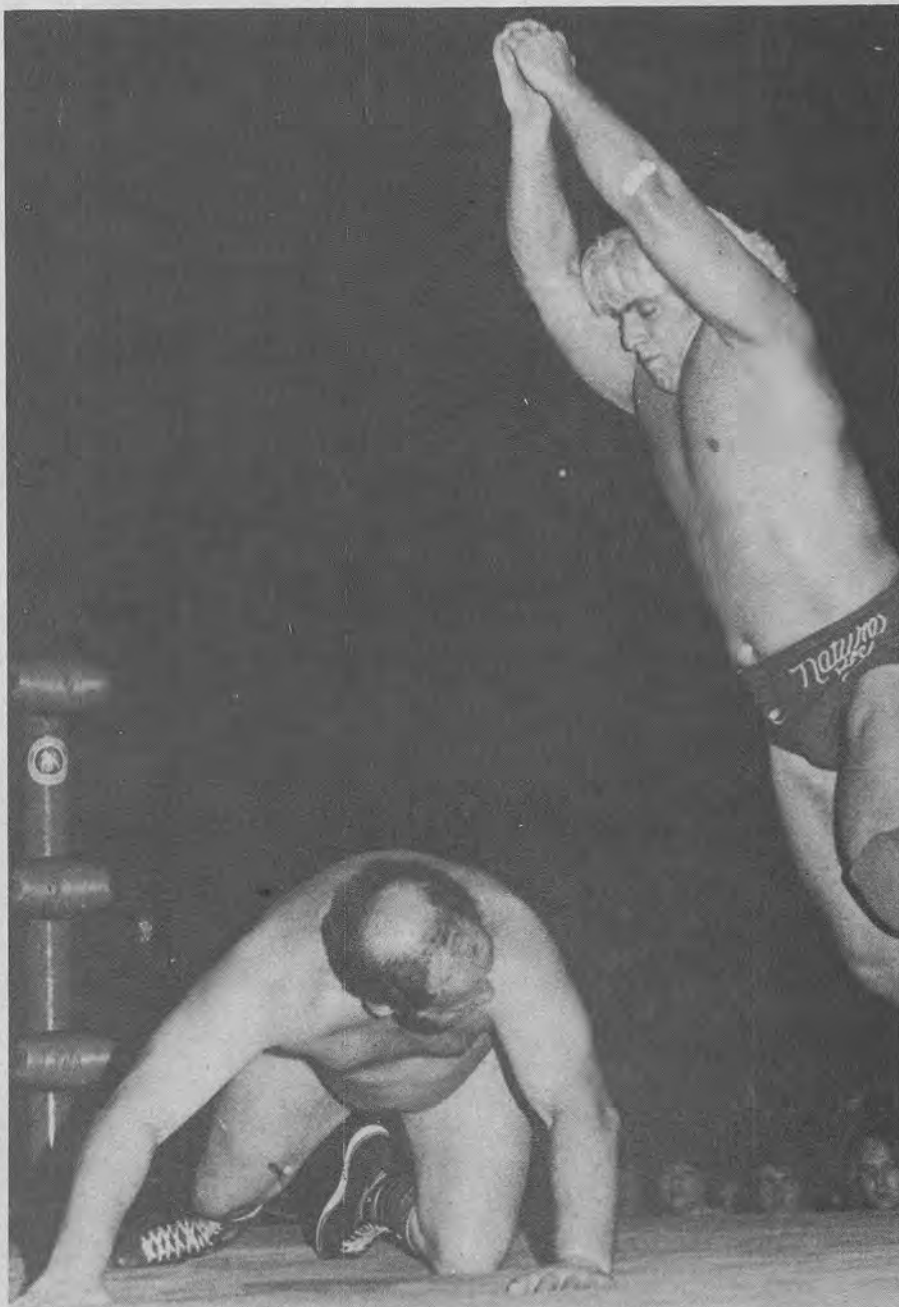
(Continued from Page 23)

flourishing. For every decent wrestler Flair incapacitates, a rulebreaker gets to escape this fine athlete's clutches. Slowly but surely, Flair is decimating the ranks of scientific wrestlers. For this, most of all, I hate Flair.

It's not too late, fortunately. Flair can change, and with him,

the current direction of the sport. There are few men who have the skill and influence to do this. Ric Flair is one of those men. It's not much of an exaggeration to say the weight of professional wrestling rests on Ric's shoulders.

I hate Ric Flair. I also realize



Flair is about to hammer Gene Anderson, another despicable rulebreaker. Still I can not find any reason to like Flair. He should smarten up and wrestle by the rules. If he did this, he could be a future champion.





Flair claims he is a great wrestler with a vast knowledge of holds. He doesn't prove it (above) against T-Bolt Patterson. The fans boo Flair even when he punished hated Gene Anderson (below).



how desperately he is needed. I'd give anything to be able to write an article entitled; "Why I No Longer Hate Ric Flair." When that article appears, wrestling will be out of the hands of rulebreakers. But until that day, I hate Ric Flair. I hate him for what he does and what he fails to do.

Wrestling needs a miracle. Ric Flair has it in his power to be a miracle worker. We can only hope. And until the miracle occurs, we are forced to hate. ☐

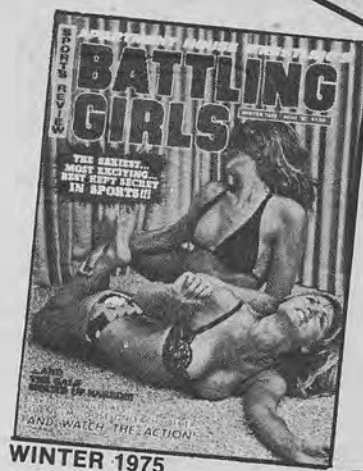
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## BEHIND THE DOOR

(Continued from Page 10)



No matter where he is, Superstar Billy Graham always finds time to spend an hour or so staring at himself in an available mirror.

Square Garden, for example, Billy has his dressing room lined with mirrors so he can stand in front of them and admire his physique.

I was astounded when I walked in there recently. Everywhere I looked there were mirrors. There was even a giant mirror on the ceiling.

"I can't stop looking at myself," Graham said. "The more I look at this beautiful face and super body, the more I understand why so many fans are in love with me. It's not always easy being the best looking, strongest, and most well-built man ever to walk the Earth." Not too conceited, is he!

I've received numerous letters accusing me of having an unfair referee. The letters have accused me of favoring the scientific wrestlers. Not true! Anybody who has seen me referee knows that I am a totally fair official. Recently, down South, I officiated a match between Paul Jones and Dick Slater.

From the start of the match, both men employed tactics I didn't care for—ones that were definitely beyond the rules of professional wrestling. I warned each man three times about obeying the rules. I gave them plenty opportunity to obey me. Finally, I momentarily stopped the match and said to both men, "The next guy who deliberately breaks the rules is disqualified! I've given both of you more than enough warning. Now obey the rules or you're gonna be heading for an early shower!"

Two minutes later, Jones sent Slater into the ropes, and tied his head between the top two strands. I yelled, "Okay, Jones, let him go!"

"No!" yelled Jones. "He's done this to me too many times. Now I'm gonna pay him back!" Paul then began to pummel a helpless Dick Slater. That's when I disqualified Jones. Afterwards, Slater said to me, "I can't stand you and I can't stand your stupid column. But I will say this. You are a really good and fair referee." Then he asked me to get out of his dressing room because he didn't want to



say any more nice things about me. As for Jones, he understood completely why I disqualified him. "You live by the sword, you die by the sword," said Jones. How right he was.


The other day I had Ching Yeh, the Oriental restaurant owner and President of Randy's Raiders, go into Tor Kamata's dressing room to take care of some dirty work for me. Kamata, who usually chants before a match, asked Ching to join him in the ceremonial chant. They sat on the floor, closed their eyes and began chanting in Japanese. After a few minutes, Ching opened his eyes, kept chanting, and spilled Kamata's ceremonial salt bag into an ashtray. Then he filled it with oil-coated beach sand. He said Kamata was absolutely distraught as he reached into the bag and came out with the smelly, sticky sand. Tor had no idea how it got there, and was so upset that he was unable to wrestle. Good! That's one less wrestler he gets a chance to maim or cripple.

You've got to see Bob Backlund work out. He wants that WWF title more than anything in the world, and he is training like no athlete I've ever seen in preparation for the day when his title chance arrives—if it arrives. If and when that day comes, my money is on Bob all the way.


Keep those "BAN DAN" letters coming. From what I understand, Dan cannot believe so many fans are against him. He has suggested the two of us wrestle in a "Loser Quits The Magazine Match." Hmmm. Sounds interesting.

Thanks for all your fantastic support during the past months. With the tremendous pressure all the rulebreakers are putting on me, I need all the fan support I can get.


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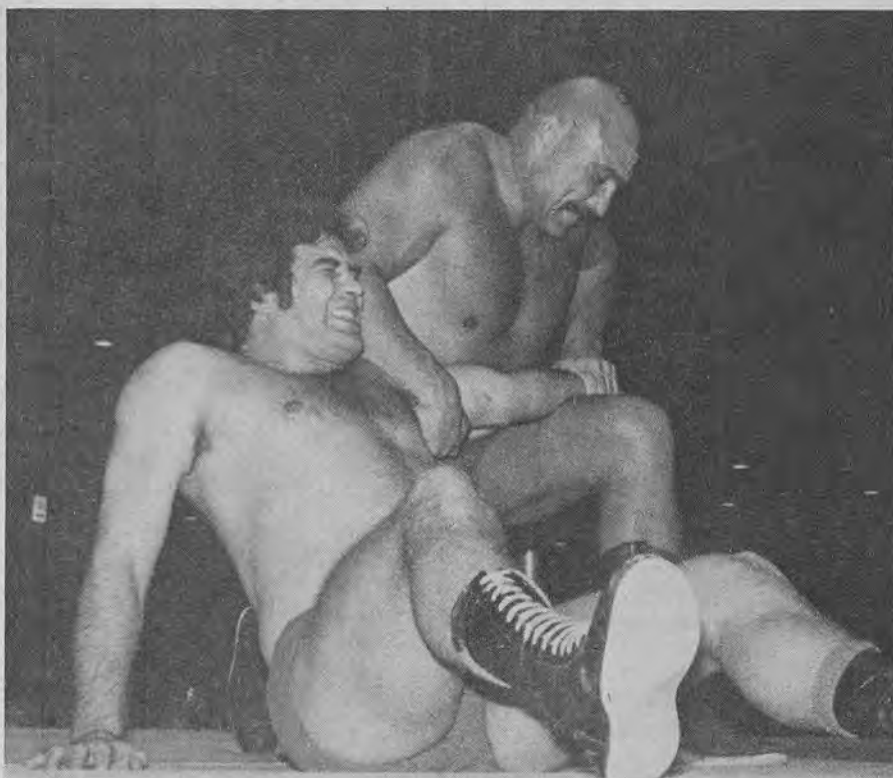
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## BODYSLAMS & PINFALLS

(Continued from Page 8)



Great wrestlers like the Mongolian Stomper should help drive cowards like Jack Brisco out of wrestling (above). Wahoo McDaniel (below) is another man who should be ousted from the sport.



of the men I admire. And that is how I know I'm helping wrestling overcome the blight of scientific cowards like Bruno Sammartino, Bob Backlund, Wahoo McDaniel, Greg Gagne, and others too sickening to mention. For that, no sacrifice is too great.

So I'll look forward to the day when the scientific wrestlers are finally driven from the sport and into hospitals. Wouldn't Bob Backlund look better with a limp? How about Jack Brisco being a spectator instead of a wrestler? This is what wrestling should be like. The fans don't know any better but will learn in time.

So, idiot readers, take up your poison pen and send off some more moronic drivel. It will do no good. I am dedicated to changing wrestling into the image of the rulebreaker, men not afraid to do what they say. If the scientific wrestlers, who cheat more often but not as well, wish to join the fold, they shall be welcome. If they try to oppose us, they will be crushed!

Rulebreakers already rule most of wrestling. Soon the conquest will be complete. By this time next year, no one will dare stand in our way. Before 1980, scientific wrestlers will be seen only on the bottom of the cards, if they wrestle at all. Heenan, Lou Albano, George Cannon, and other managers will run the commissions.

The future is coming. Get used to it, clowns! ☐



# ON THE ROAD

(Continued from Page 18)



Ken Patera as he looked in February 1974. He was a good, scientific wrestler. Although Patera is at the top of his profession now, is he truly happy?

You are forced to associate with men you loathe. You are not free. You live in fear—not of other wrestlers, but of fans who may take their anger at you a bit too far.

"The one nice thing is the fame all this brings you. I'm not proud, I enjoy being able to live better than I ever lived before. But I do miss some old friends, those people who won't

talk to me any more because I changed my tactics. If they had been true friends—like you are—what I did in the ring would not matter.

"And I certainly can't rely on my manager, Lou Albano, to be a tower of strength for me. He has his own problems. He doesn't need to listen to mine. Don't let anyone tell you differently. It is lonely at the top, especially when you've made it like I have. Everyone thinks you have it made. Little do they know what it is really like."

I had to stop the tape here. Ken was nearly in tears, and I didn't think it was fair to go on with this. He walked out of the house and went for a stroll along the beach. He needed some time by himself.

When he came back, I thought it best to talk about anything but wrestling. There was no need to get him upset again. Then some neighbors dropped by, and we all spent a pleasant evening together.

But I cannot forget what Ken said. Maybe too many people have misjudged the fellow. Maybe we should all just leave him alone. □

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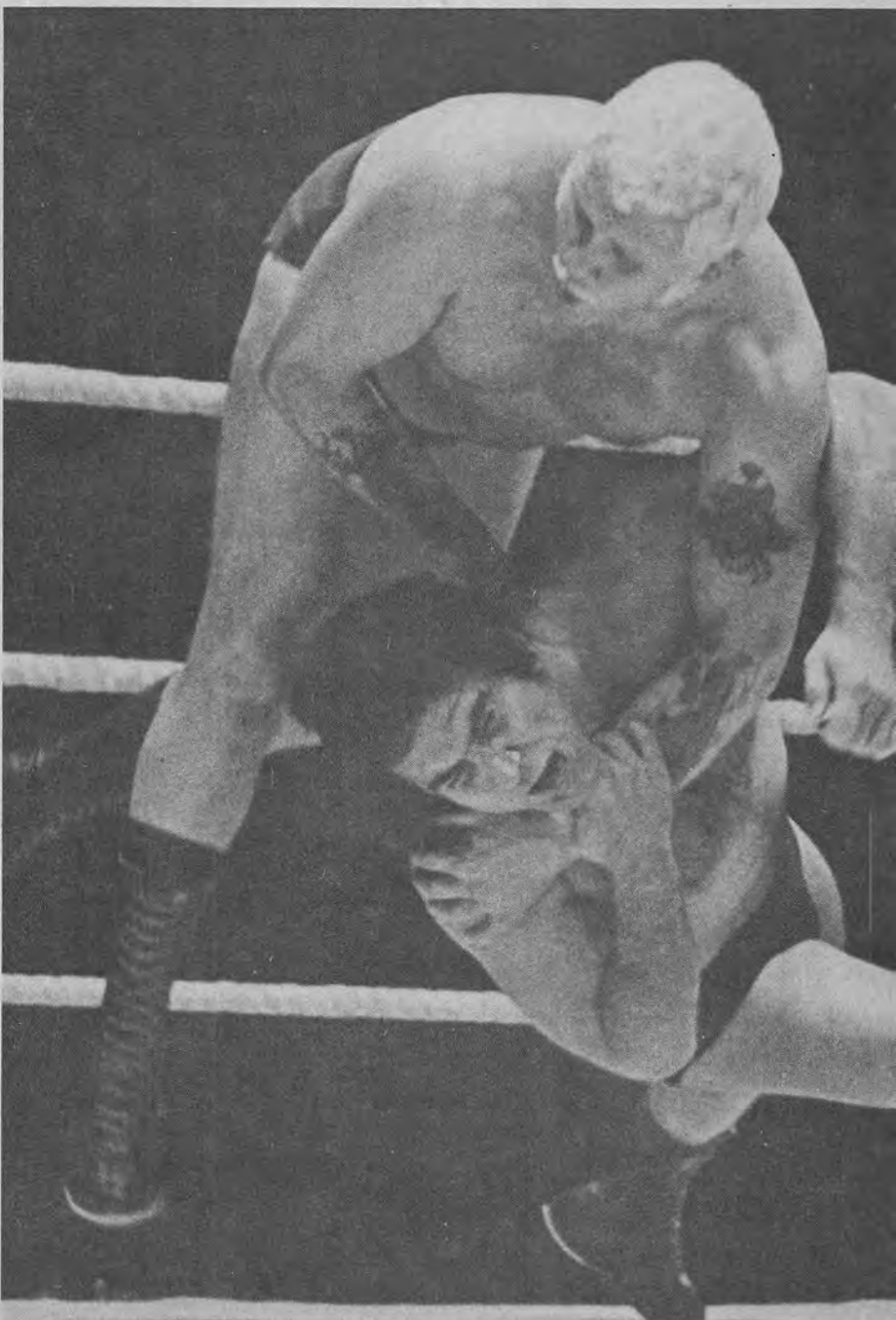
# JACK BRISCO

(Continued from Page 28)

we know, we may be depriving Brisco of a title. Doing nothing, we're choosing Race over Brisco."

The argument continued for over two hours. Tempers grew short, a common occurrence when men argue principles. At

times, people changed their opinions only to change them back again. The difficulty of the decision, and its implications, were of the utmost importance. When the arguments ended, everyone admitted to being confused. "I'll feel we made the



An armdrag and takedown by Jack Brisco sees him take the advantage in a 1974 match against Harley Race. Jack Brisco can become champion and we know how he can do it!



wrong decision no matter what we decide," was the general attitude of all concerned.

Here is our "wrong decision," or, as someone else put it, "the coward's way out." (The one who said that was the one who suggested it.) We are only printing what you've read so far. Brisco now knows the vulnerability exists, but he doesn't know what it is. Race has the same information. The contest is on. Will Brisco find the secret before Race can correct it? We'll know the answer if there's a new NWA champion.

This is our final decision—so far. We are still discussing the principles involved. New arguments are continually being thrown into the pool of contention. Everyone has changed his opinion at least twice. No one is happy with our present solution.

If any readers have opinions on this situation, please write this magazine. However, we do not want people who will be swayed by allegiance to either Jack or Harley. This decision must be settled by logical argument, not emotional loyalty. Remember, the conclusion will apply to any similar situation. That would mean we would be obligated to publish a report stating how Abdullah the Butcher could be champion. What applies to one applies to all.

As of this writing, the film revealing Harley's weakness is locked in our office safe. There are no copies. It will be removed from the safe only if we decide to publish the findings. No one outside the office will be able to see the film, nor will it be discussed by anyone who has seen it.

So far, we have made the best of a difficult situation. As said before, whatever we did would be wrong. ☐

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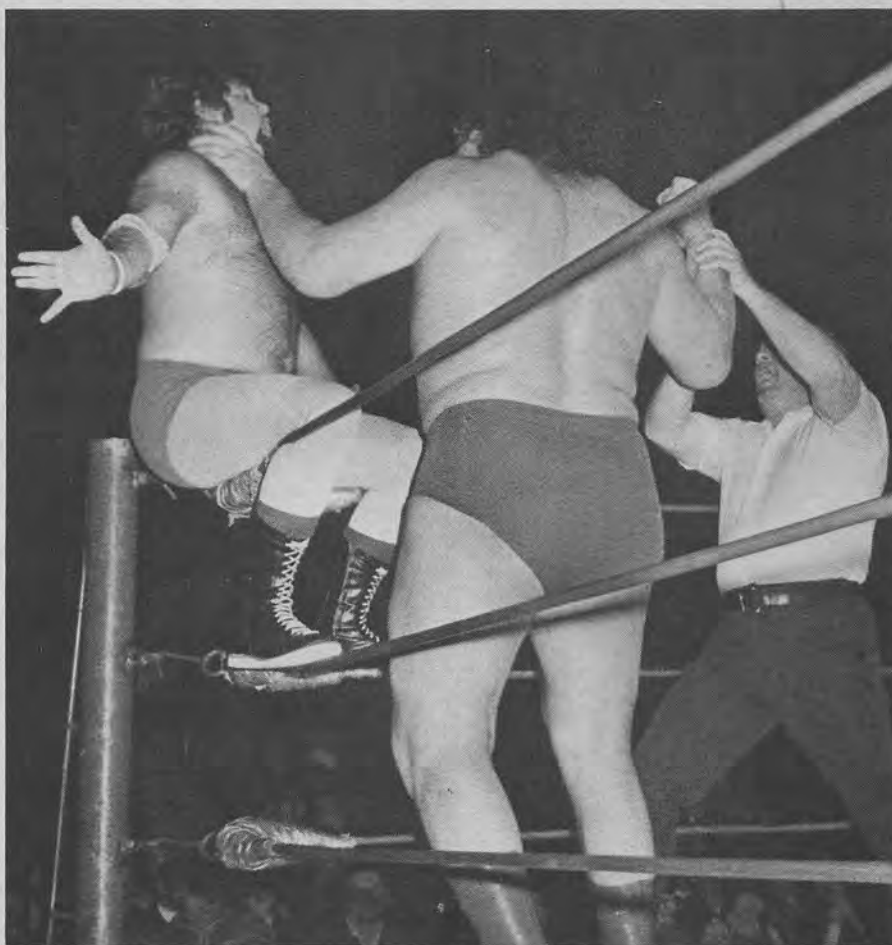
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# ANDRE THE GIANT

(Continued from Page 33)



The referee stops Andre from smashing Lawler (above). Andre literally walks all over his opponent (below).



rather than conquer. when the referee finally disqualified Baker for bringing a chair into the ring, the crowd breathed a collective sigh of relief. No one wanted to see a killing.

As for Andre's revenge match against Lawler, it was everything Andre's many fans could hope for. The behemoth grappler still smarted from a controversial loss to Lawler a few months ago. With consummate skill, Andre wrestled Lawler to defeat. Jerry tried to repeat the formula that had worked for him in the first match; Andre was ready for that. Lawler never stood a chance once he committed himself to the earlier strategy. The match was over in less than 15 minutes.

After the match, reporters had



plenty of questions for the two winners, but not about their victories. The promoter had told them of Andre's desire not to wrestle Ladd and they wanted statements from both grapplers.

Ladd was more than happy to meet the press, although one sensed something strange with his first statement, "Though I'd have been ready to wrestle Andre anytime, I respect the man's decision."

Ladd publicly saying he respects another wrestler? The shock of that hadn't subsided when he added, "And I won't challenge Andre. If the two of us ever wrestle against each other, it will be because he wants the match."

"Do you agree," one reporter asked, "with his reasons for not wrestling against you?"

"I respect his opinions."

"That's not what I asked."

"I know."

"After verbally battling with Ladd for five minutes, the reporters hurried to Andre's dressing room. The Giant was told of Ladd's remarks and asked for a statement about them.

"As I said in my letter," Andre declared, "these are delicate times for Ladd. He's going in a whole new direction traveling amongst his old enemies. Wrestling would benefit a great deal by Ladd being a popular, scientific grappler. By not challenging me, I think he's trying to stay where he is now. For that, we can all be grateful."

The reporters were about to leave when they saw the promoter hurrying through the halls. They wanted to ask him a few questions about the situation but he wouldn't stand still.

"I've got to see my friend, Andre," he called over his shoulder. "I want to make sure everything was to his liking. If not, we'll change it for his next appearance here."

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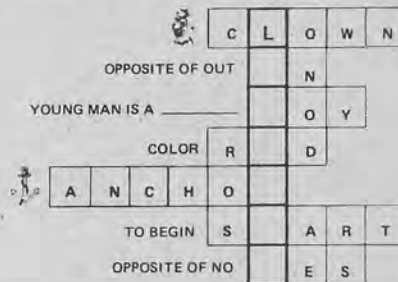
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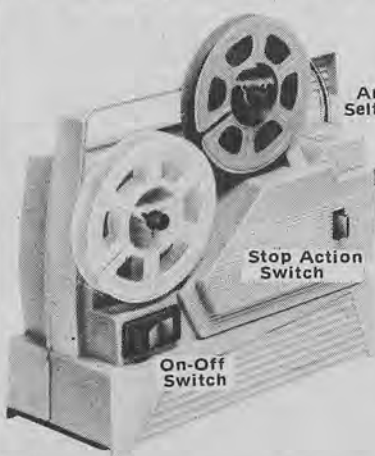
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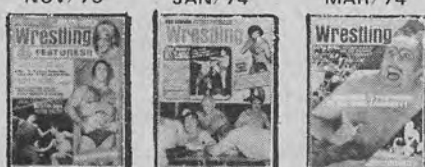
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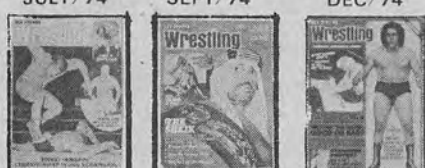
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# BACKLUND MOPS

(Continued from Page 35)



Bob tries for the pin (above). He uses his atomic spinebreaker to finish off Race (below).



top condition. Nothing was left to chance."

"Do you think Race took you lightly?" Bob's companion asked.

"Maybe," Backlund admitted, "but the man is a successful veteran. The first minute should have told him he was in trouble.. The match lasted for longer than a minute, so he had to be trying his best then. But even if he did wrestle his worst, I still accomplished everything I wanted."

There's many reasons why Bob should look happily upon that match. From the first, he controlled the action. All his maneuvers were executed with consummate skill. Agility and strength were combined to dominate Race. Harley grew more and more frustrated.

What confounded the veteran was the apparent ease in which Bob repulsed his attacks. Race would try an armtwist, a headlock, even his famous Indian death lock, all to no avail. Backlund took it all in stride, never really getting into trouble.

must have spent five hours a day in the gym working on a few important maneuvers. I spent another hour just in general exercises, to make sure I was in



Harley kept trying to gain control and nothing seemed to work.

As Race grew more and more frustrated, Bob noticed his foe grew more and more sloppy. Bob waited until Race tired himself out with rage and reckless maneuvers. Harley couldn't believe this young man had so much poise and intelligence. That made Harley angrier, and that made him even more wild.

Finally, exhausted more from frustration than anything else, Race either fell or jumped out of the ring, depending on who you talk to. The referee counted Harley out and the match was Backlund's.

At this match, Race was still months away from regaining the NWA title. It's clear he would wrestle Backlund differently with the title on the line. Harley doesn't lose his temper anymore, nor does he underestimate opponents. Bob doesn't pretend it would be easy for him to take the NWA belt. But that isn't the point.

"I'm not saying it's my greatest match because I defeated Harley Race," Bob explains, "but it's the greatest I've ever wrestled. It doesn't matter who the opponent was. I was at my best. Everything I tried worked well. My maneuvers had a precision grace which was just great. I did everything I wanted to do. That's why I consider it the best I've ever done."

"I've come as close in few matches but never against Race. That was when I realized how good I could be. Whenever I'm down, I look back on that match and know there's a future for me in this sport. It's nice to know."

Some people won't agree with Bob. They feel his best match is yet to come. The man keeps getting better and better. Every time he walks into an arena, Bob may have a new answer to "What is your best match?" □

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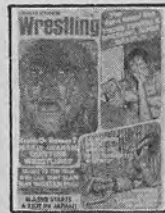
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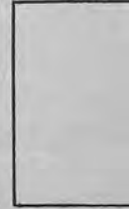
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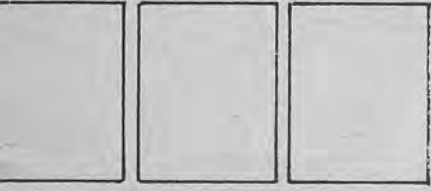
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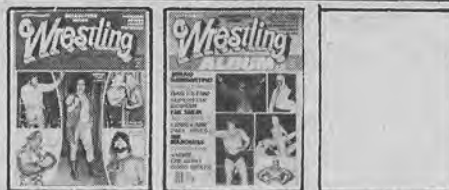


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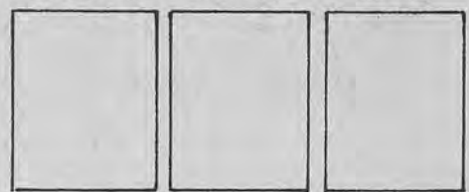


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## SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from Page 45)

slip from being the most popular wrestler to the fourth position in that list. I will grant you that Andre the Giant, Ivan Putski, and Dusty Rhodes are good. I will even grant you that they are popular. But I don't think they can beat Bruno Sammartino.

I think there should be some sort of official investigation into how Bruno slipped so low so fast. It might prove rather interesting.

ISAAC PENDLETON  
Shaker Heights, Ohio

## THE WAY OF THE WORLD

I'm glad someone finally had the courage to speak the truth about Dusty Rhodes. Your reporter, Randy Gordon, certainly deserves a lot of credit for saying, "Why Dusty Rhodes Will Never Win the NWA Title" (July 1977). He was absolutely correct.

Please don't misunderstand me. I think Dusty Rhodes is a very talented wrestler. But I don't believe he has what it takes to become a champion. Maybe I'm wrong, but I don't think so. He has had more chances to win the belt than any other wrestler. He has yet to succeed.

There are many people who privately think the same way I do, but they are afraid to say it publicly. Thank goodness Randy Gordon was there to put our fears into print.

JOHN DEVERE  
Orlando, Fla.

## WILL HE SUCCEED?

I have just finished reading "Ivan Putski's Startling Claim: 'I Will Save Ken Patera From Lou Albano!'" (July 1977). It was a most revealing article which clearly showed that it is time for Patera to go back to the way he

once was.

Ken does not need Lou Albano to be popular and successful. He was doing well enough on his own. I personally am very glad a man like Ivan Putski has decided to strike out on a crusade to save Patera. Let us just hope he succeeds.



The mission upon which Ivan has dedicated himself is a vital one to the future of wrestling. No one should ever underestimate the power and potential of Ken Patera. Just look at what he did to Bruno Sammartino. If he could put his strength to good purposes instead of evil, he could become a great superstar.

Ivan Putski must succeed in his quest. He must reform Ken Patera. The future of wrestling is at stake!

ALLYN MCGOWEN  
Boston, Mass.

## STUFF IT YOURSELF, DAN!

This time Dan Shocket has gone too far. It's bad enough he defends rulebreakers in his column, "Bodyslams and Pinfalls," or sits for an interview with Sheik, but when he says Joe LeDuc should "Tell the Fans to Stuff It!!!" (July 1977), he oversteps his bounds.

I know a reporter has the right to say what he feels, but Shocket (Continued on page 64)



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## SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from Page 62)



Joe LeDuc has read Dan Shocket's controversial story about him. He assures his fans he will remain scientific.

"Want You To See" (July 1977) was a most interesting article, but it left me with some questions about the motives of Fred Blassie.

Where does Blassie get off thinking he can destroy the career of a talented young man like Bob Backlund? It isn't fair. It isn't right. Bob is an excellent wrestler, and he deserves the chance to prove himself. That he conspired to cover-up the results of this match should make him liable for criminal prosecution.

This intrigue thankfully came to an end with the publication of your article. Keep up the good work. You're doing great!

**ANDY SOBEL**  
 Bronx, N.Y.

Fred Blassie is still intent on ending the career of Bob Backlund. Backlund vows not to let Blassie sidetrack his future plans.

has certainly abused this right. But there is no need for him to begin trying to convert good, scientific wrestlers like Joe LeDuc to his warped way of thinking. Freedom of the press is one thing, but Shocket is something else. Whatever happened to journalists remaining impartial and objective?

With any luck, Joe LeDuc will ignore what Shocket said and continue with his present style. However, if he should change his ways for the worse, we will have no one to blame but Dan Shocket!

**BETH ADLER**  
 Wichita, Kan.

## VERY INTRIGUING

"Bob Backlund vs. Baron Von Raschke: The Match They Didn't

## A VOICE OF REASON

In the insane world of wrestling, there is one voice of reason. I am referring, of course, to Dan Shocket and his column, "Bodyslams and Pinfalls." I don't always agree with Mr. Shocket, but I do admire his courage for speaking his mind.

In his July 1977 column, he blasted the commission for stripping champions of their titles. He was absolutely correct for launching this assault. The



commissions should never be allowed to do this, yet they go on their merry way, ignoring the pleas of fans to the contrary. Hopefully, Mr. Shocket's column will wake people up to the bad situation at hand. Then maybe something can be done!

ROBERT CROMIESON  
Honesdale, Fla.

#### OPEN LETTER TO KEN PATERA

Dear Ken,

Ivan Putski has tried to convince you to go back to your once good, clean wrestling ways. Many others would also like to see you turn scientific again. I am speaking on behalf of the many fans who would like to see you give up your rulebreaking ways. We would like to see you become the great scientific wrestler you once were.

You changed your ways for money. And because of your want for money, you went under the management of one of the most disgusting managers around—Lou Albano.

Deep down, you seem to be a man who would like the support of the fans again. You would like to hear those words again: "Here comes Ken Patera, that great wrestler." Damn, Ken, is money really worth your happiness, the support of all those great fans and friends, and your confidence? Just think, you are a hell of a lot more fortunate than a lot of other people.

Ken, tear up that contract with Albano and come to your senses—be good again, be happy again, and most of all, gain back your confidence. Wrestling needs great men like you once were.

Think this over, and think about the fans, your friends, yourself, and your future. You have no respectable future with Lou Albano as your manager.

DAWN A. FISHER  
Ashland, N.H. ☐



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"I managed to raise enough money with my savings to invest in a combination motel, restaurant, grocery, and service station. It didn't take long to get my eyes opened. In order to keep that business going my wife and I worked from dawn to dusk, 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Putting in all those hours didn't match my idea of independence and it gave me no time for my favorite sport—golf! Finally we both agreed that I should look for something else.

"I found it. Not right away. I investigated a lot of businesses offered as franchises. I felt that I wanted the guidance of an experienced company—wanted to have the benefit of the plans that had brought success to others, plus the benefit of running my own business under an established name that had national recognition.

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